



The

Criterion

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Catholic Schools Week

See our annual Catholic Schools Week Supplement, pages 1B-20B.

CriterionOnline.com

January 28, 2022

Vol. LXII, No. 16 75¢

Catholics urged to pray, work for day when every life is protected in law

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The Catholic Church’s opposition to abortion “is a response of love for both mothers and their children in the womb,” said the chairman of the U.S. bishops’ pro-life committee in a statement issued to mark the Jan. 22 anniversary of the Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* decision making abortion legal in all 50 states.



Archbishop William E. Lori

“The Church’s teaching proclaims a message of life, reminding us that every life is a sacred gift from God from the moment of conception until natural death,” said Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori.

In November, the archbishop began a three-year term as the chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

The archbishop’s Jan. 21 statement came as thousands of pro-life supporters gathered to “stand for the rights of the unborn” at the 49th annual March for Life on the National Mall in Washington.

“Equality Begins in the Womb” was the theme of this year’s event, which always includes a rally with dozens of speakers on the Mall, followed by a march to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The March for Life Defense and Education Fund, which sponsors the annual event, and many pro-life groups said they were hopeful this year’s rally would mark a pivotal turning point for abortion in the U.S. Many expect the Supreme Court’s ruling on a Mississippi law banning most abortions after 15 weeks will lead to limiting *Roe* or overturning it.

See LORI, page 2A



The front half of an estimated 1,000 participants in the Indiana March for Life in Indianapolis on Jan. 24 head toward the Indiana Statehouse for a pro-life rally. The other half wrap around the south side of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument seen in the background. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Indiana March for Life and rally draw nearly 1,000 hopeful for the end of *Roe v. Wade*

By Natalie Hoefler

When students from Father Michael Shawe Memorial High School in Madison learned their trip to the National March for Life in Washington was canceled this year, “They were disappointed,” said Chemaighn Drumm, the school’s retreat and pro-life coordinator.

Instead, they came to Indianapolis for the Indiana March for Life events on Jan. 23 and 24—and their disappointment evaporated.

“They were blown away at the number of people, the chanting and walking through the streets of Indy. And being right in the thick of the crowd and next to the speakers at the rally really solidified their support for life,” said Drumm.

Indeed, a spirit of hope resounds each year at the Indiana March for Life.

But there was an additional sense of enthusiasm at this year’s event on Jan. 24, attended by nearly 1,000 pro-life advocates who came from throughout central and southern Indiana, as well as cities in the Indiana dioceses of Evansville, Fort Wayne-South Bend and Lafayette.

It was brought about by the prospect of the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision on *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* later this year that could overturn the *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion. The 1973 ruling has led to the death of more than 62 million unborn babies.

Marc Tuttle, executive director of Right to Life Indianapolis that sponsored the march and rally, spoke assuredly to the crowd of the 1973 decision’s reversal.

“When *Roe v. Wade* is overturned—and it’s not ‘if,’ but

See RALLY, page 12A

Strive to transform people’s hearts, not just laws, Archbishop Thompson says at pro-life Mass

By Natalie Hoefler

History might have been made with this year’s Indiana March for Life events on Jan. 23 and 24 as being the last with nationally legalized abortion.

With the potential for a positive outcome of the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* case later this year, “Many talk about these days as being the closest we’ve been to overturning *Roe v. Wade*,” Archbishop Charles C. Thompson told the roughly 700 people present for a Mass celebrated at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 24.

See MASS, page 11A



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson delivers a homily on Jan. 24 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis on Jan. 24. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

E6 Catholic Men's Conference set for February 26 in St. Leon

By Sean Gallagher

The seventh annual E6 Catholic Men's Conference will take place from 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on Feb. 26 in the auditorium of East Central High School, 1 Trojan Place, in St. Leon.

Sponsored by All Saints Parish in Dearborn County, "E6" in the conference's title refers to the sixth chapter of St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians in which the Apostle calls believers to take up "the armor of God" in the spiritual fight against the devil (Eph 6:11).

The conference this year will feature speakers Matthew Kelly and Gus Lloyd. Kelly, a native of Australia, is a



Matthew Kelly

husband and father of five children. He is also a writer and Catholic speaker who has been heard by more than 5 million people in more than 50 countries. Kelly is the founder of the Cincinnati-based Dynamic Catholic Institute.

Lloyd is the host of "Seize the Day," a morning radio show on Sirius XM's The Catholic Channel. He is also the author of several books on the Catholic faith and speaks at conferences and parishes across the country.



Gus Lloyd

"Both of our speakers are well known and are well equipped to help men to be saints—the best version of themselves," said Father Jonathan

Meyer, pastor with Father Daniel Mahan in *solidum* of All Saints. "Their joy and conviction is contagious."

In addition to presentations by the speakers, the conference will include

Mass, the availability of the sacrament of penance throughout the day and prayer between the sessions. Lunch will also be provided for attendees.

Like last year, this year's E6 Conference will also be available via livestream.

"Anyone can register and view it with their family, friends, men's group or entire parish, for only \$10 per group," said conference organizer Joe Yunger, a member of All Saints Parish. "An email will be sent with a live stream link a few days before the conference, which will make it easy for anyone to tune in and be a part of it."

For more information on the livestream option, visit www.e6catholicmensconference.com/virtual-event.

To attend in person, the registration fee for men 25 years and older is \$40. For men under 25, the cost is \$25. Clergy and religious may attend at no cost.

Father Meyer said the relevance of the conference for Catholic men is all the more clear considering the challenges they face in today's society.

"Continuing to come out of and still live in a COVID culture requires men to be bold in their faith," he said. "Isolation, depression and frustration are on the rise—men need each other and the Lord to stand strong in these difficult times. They also need in-person events to be brothers."

"The E6 Catholic Men's conference is a platform to listen to the world's greatest Catholic speakers live," said Yunger, "to meet like-minded men and grow in Christian brotherhood, to obtain resources to help with their respective vocations, and to lead their family as the domestic priest that they are in their household."

(For more information about the E6 Catholic Men's Conference, including registration for it, visit www.e6catholicmensconference.com.) †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

January 29–February 10, 2022

January 29 – 5 p.m.

Mass and Presentation of Ecclesial Movements at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

February 1 – 10:30 a.m.

Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

February 2 – 9 a.m.

Mass for students of Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Indianapolis, at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church

February 3 – 10 a.m.

Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

February 6 – 9:15 a.m.

Mass for ArchIndy SEEK22 at Country Lake Christian Retreat, Underwood, Ind.

February 6 – 2 p.m.

Annual Scout Awards Ceremony at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

February 8 – 8:30 a.m.

Mass for students of St. Philip Neri School, Indianapolis, at St. Philip Neri Church

February 9 – 9 a.m.

Mass for students of St. Patrick School, Terre Haute, at St. Patrick Church

February 10 – 8:15 a.m.

Virtual Judicatories meeting

February 10 – 10 a.m.

Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

Ukrainian Church leaders express concern over effects of possible Russian invasion

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Ukrainian Catholic bishops in the U.S. asked Catholics to pray, be informed and donate to help those affected by Ukraine's humanitarian crisis as Russian troops mass on the border of the eastern European country ahead of a possible invasion.

"People near the front line often lack the basics—clean water, food, clothes, medicine," they said.

They compared the Russian buildup of troops to King Herod's thirst for power and hegemony.

"This is a question of life and death, as nostalgia for an empire lost has led to senseless slaughter and immense suffering throughout Ukraine," said

the Jan. 22 statement signed by all five Ukrainian Catholic bishops in the United States.

"The war in Ukraine is real. It kills, maims and destroys daily. An escalated Russian invasion will generate additional millions of refugees, more dead and injured, more tears and pain. Still, the people of Ukraine courageously endure. As they stand with a gun to their head, they ask for our solidarity," they said.

In a statement on Jan. 24, Catholic bishops in Ukraine and Poland cited former popes, papal encyclicals and the Catechism of the Catholic Church to show Catholic teaching that war is never the answer to problems. †

LORI

continued from page 1A

"In remembrance of the tragic anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, and in petition for full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life for all individuals," the

Catholic Church in the U.S. "recognizes the National Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children," observed every Jan. 22, Archbishop Lori said.

He, too, pointed to the Mississippi case, *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, and invited all Catholics and other people of goodwill

"to fast and pray on this day, and frequently between now and June, when we anticipate a decision" on *Dobbs*.

"We pray that this important case might reverse *Roe* and its unjust abortion license," Archbishop Lori said.

"We cannot build a truly just society and remain complacent when faced with the massive impact of *Roe v. Wade*, which has taken over 60 million lives since 1973," he said. "May we pray, fast and work for the day when the gift of every human life is protected in law and welcomed in love."

Archbishop Lori was the principal celebrant and homilist for the Jan. 20 opening Mass of the annual National Prayer Vigil for Life at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Early on Jan. 21, Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley of Boston likewise was the principal celebrant and homilist for the vigil's closing Mass, and many who attended left the basilica to head to the National Mall for the March for Life. †

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- 1 Ethics Point Confidential, Online Reporting**
www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com or 888-393-6810
- 2 Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator**
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carlahill@archindy.org



Phone Numbers:

Main office:..... 317-236-1570
Advertising:..... 317-236-1585
Toll free: 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1570
Circulation: 317-236-1585
Toll free: 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1585

Price: \$22.00 per year, 75 cents per copy

Postmaster:

Send address changes to *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367

Web site: www.CriterionOnline.com

E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

Published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January. Mailing address: 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN. Copyright © 2022 Criterion Press Inc. ISSN 0574-4350.

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The Criterion (ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January.

1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367
317-236-1570
800-382-9836 ext. 1570
criterion@archindy.org

Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
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POSTMASTER:
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ICC advocates at Statehouse for families in deepest poverty

By Victoria Arthur

The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) is out front on a number of bills at the Statehouse that would affect individuals and families considered among the poorest of the poor in the state.

Leaders of the ICC—the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Indiana—



support some of the proposed legislation while opposing other bills, in line with the long history of

Catholic social teaching with respect to the most vulnerable.

“Some of these bills would benefit families in the greatest need and help lift them out of poverty, while we have serious concerns that others may have the opposite effect,” said Angela Espada, executive director of the ICC. “We always want to stand with the most economically disadvantaged among us, especially our children.”

The ICC strongly supports House Bill 1361, a bipartisan measure that would strengthen protections for those who qualify for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF is a federal government program that provides grants to the states to administer cash assistance payments to families in deepest poverty.

But those families often face barriers in receiving that help because of outdated state guidelines, according to Rep. Chuck Goodrich (R-Noblesville), the primary author of House Bill 1361. That includes a current asset limit of \$1,000 for families qualifying for TANF to continue receiving those temporary benefits, which have a lifetime cap of 24 months for adults.

The measure that Goodrich calls “hand-up legislation” would increase that

asset limit to \$10,000—and would exempt \$20,000 of total equity value of the family’s motor vehicles from eligibility guidelines. Because these families need reliable transportation for getting to and from work and child care services, this provision is critical, according to the ICC, other advocates and co-authors of the legislation.

“This bill allows people to better themselves and stay on the program until they are in a position to no longer need assistance,” said Rep. Cherrish Pryor (D-Indianapolis), among the co-authors of House Bill 1361 and a longtime collaborator with Rep. Goodrich on TANF-related legislation.

The bill passed unanimously on Jan. 20 in the House committee on Family, Children and Human Affairs and is now awaiting action by the full House of Representatives.

A broader TANF-related bill backed by the ICC and other advocates for the poor, including the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute, was awaiting a committee hearing at press time. Senate Bill 327 marks the latest attempt to update major provisions of the TANF program in Indiana, which hasn’t seen substantive change in more than three decades.

As in previous years, Sen. Jon Ford (R-Terre Haute) is leading the charge to modernize TANF in Indiana by pushing for the first monthly increase in cash payouts in 34 years and dramatically expanding eligibility for the program.

For those in deepest poverty, TANF’s cash assistance payments are a lifeline. But those monthly payouts—\$288 for a family of three, for example—have not been increased since they were set by state law three decades ago.

Moreover, only a fraction of the poorest families in Indiana currently receive even those modest benefits from

the federal program because of outdated eligibility guidelines—another issue that Senate Bill 327 is designed to address.

Indiana’s eligibility level for TANF is the fourth-lowest in the United States, behind Louisiana, Arkansas and Alabama. To be eligible for TANF, the maximum income of a Hoosier family must be less than 17 percent of the federal poverty level. Indiana set its income requirements to qualify for TANF in the mid-1990s, when welfare reform was signed into law by then-President Bill Clinton. Those eligibility guidelines have not been adjusted for inflation since then.

While the ICC and its allies continue to advocate for these long-awaited changes, they are working to oppose another TANF-related measure. House Bill 1410 would transfer oversight of the mandatory job search guideline for TANF eligibility to the state level from the local level, where it is currently administered.

ICC leaders argue that local agencies providing support services for families in deep poverty are best equipped to understand each family’s unique needs and circumstances and, therefore, are in the best position to oversee and monitor their job search activities.

“We want to be clear that we are not opposed to the concept of the applicant job search requirement, as the

Church greatly values the dignity and transformative power of work,” said Alexander Mingus, associate director of the ICC. “Our primary concern is based on the Church’s understanding of subsidiarity, which means that decisions should be made at the lowest competent level, especially when decisions affect the poor and most vulnerable.”

Jessica Fraser, an advocate for the poor who has worked on TANF-related issues for 10 years, shared similar concerns with legislators about House Bill 1410.

“This bill doesn’t really change policy,” said Fraser, director of the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute, formerly the Indiana Institute for Working Families. “But it changes the state’s ability to be flexible when people are going through tough times.”

To follow this and other priority legislation of the ICC, visit www.indianacc.org. This website includes access to I-CAN, the Indiana Catholic Action Network, which offers the Church’s position on key issues. Those who sign up for I-CAN receive alerts on legislation moving forward and ways to contact their elected representatives.

(Victoria Arthur, a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, is a correspondent for The Criterion.) †

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Editorial



Joanie Wilson, left, and Angel Hudspeth, both students of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis, take part on Jan. 24 in the Indiana March for Life in downtown Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

We must build a civilization of love to overcome abortion in our culture

“It is a poverty that a child must die so that you may live as you wish.”
—St. Teresa of Calcutta

We recently marked the 49th anniversary of the Supreme Court’s tragic *Roe v. Wade* decision, which on Jan. 22, 1973, legalized abortion on demand across the United States.

And despite the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the national March for Life took place in Washington on Jan. 21, where young and old, Catholic and Protestant, and people of other faith traditions and walks of life braved the frigid 20-degree temperatures to be voices for the unborn.

Pro-life organizers had anticipated that as many as 50,000 people would attend this year, and although no official statistics were available as *The Criterion* went to press, many news outlets reported “tens of thousands” marched for life.

The Indiana March for Life on Jan. 24 drew an estimated 1,000 participants. And like those who took part in the march in our nation’s capital, the energy and enthusiasm of those who marched through the downtown streets of Indianapolis was palpable. Holding signs, praying and chanting pro-life messages, the group let passersby know the cold wasn’t going to deter their heartfelt efforts for life.

Pro-life marches across the U.S. in recent days were no doubt energized because of a case currently before the U.S. Supreme Court involving a Mississippi law banning most abortions after 15 weeks.

Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization is seen by many as a direct challenge to *Roe*. Court watchers speculate the justices could decide to overturn *Roe* or at the very least severely curtail it with their decision, with the ruling expected in June or July. One possible result is abortion’s legality becoming an issue for states to decide.

As people who respect all human life from conception to natural death, we believe it would be a providential step to overturn *Roe* after nearly five decades.

But even if the Court upholds the Mississippi law, as disciples of Christ we must continue to pray for the conversion of hardened hearts who will continue to support abortion. Their transformation is essential in our momentum of building a culture of life.

“Minorities account for two-thirds

of abortions each year” as “whatever meager assistance comes [is] far too late,” Boston Cardinal Sean O’Malley said in his homily at an early Jan. 21 Mass that ended the annual National Prayer Vigil for Life in Washington. “We are failing them and their children in their time of need. We can and must do better.

“Dismantling unjust laws is only the beginning. We still have the arduous task of creating a pro-life culture, of changing heart and minds,” he continued, but if pro-lifers “come across as judgmental and self-righteous, we’re never going to get a hearing in America.”

Rather, Cardinal O’Malley said, “our task is not to judge others, but to try to bring healing. ... Our job is to build a society that takes care of everybody, where every person counts, where every life is important.” Otherwise, he warned, “poverty, racism and economic injustice will continue to fuel abortion in [a] post-*Roe v. Wade* world.”

The post-*Roe v. Wade* world we pray for will not allow 2,363 abortions per day in the U.S., or the nearly 1 million abortions performed in our country each year. “Most of those abortions are performed on unmarried women in poverty,” Cardinal O’Malley noted.

We must remind those who are considering abortion that adoption is a loving option.

Cardinal O’Malley called it ironic that “2 million Americans each year try to adopt children, and only 20,000 U.S. babies are given up [for adoption]. At the same time, a million babies are being aborted. It’s tragic.”

He added, “Only a huge educational effort will be able to change the cultural prejudices that exist. Adoption needs to be more user-friendly; it needs to be more transparent, and it needs to be celebrated,” adding that adoptive parents can find a role model in St. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus.

“Changing the laws is important, but building a civilization of love is what will ultimately overcome abortion in our culture,” Cardinal O’Malley said. Promoting the social gospel, human rights and economic justice are needed, he added, “to build a civilization of love—or there will be no civilization at all.”

—Mike Krokos

Be Our Guest/John Garvey

COVID-19 and scientism

At the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, I was puzzled about how our reactions to it divided along party lines. There is no obvious reason why Democrats should fear sickness and death more than Republicans. But the division has persisted, indeed hardened; there is clearly something else going on.

One possible cause is that a pandemic invites government intervention, something Democrats are fond of. We’ve seen more of that from President Joe Biden, blue-state governors and big-city mayors than from their Republican counterparts.

Another reason for our division is not political, though I missed it for a long time because it aligns with party affiliation. It has to do with beliefs about science.

The cognoscenti say that those who object to vaccines, masks, quarantines, tests, crowd controls and school closings fail to “follow the science.” Mainstream media see those objectors as mouth-breathing nimrods who lack the wit or the education to know what’s good for them.

This is unfair. There is much we don’t know about the progress of the infection or the efficacy of our responses. We used to worry about doorknobs and surfaces; now we don’t. We’ve gone back and forth about masks.

It now seems that the vaccines, although they help prevent severe outcomes from infection, are much less effective at preventing transmission of the omicron variant than they were the delta variant.

It’s not that science isn’t helpful, but there is a kind of scientism on the secular left that helps explain our disunion on this subject. And it’s better aligned with religion than with politics. The division is not confined to public health policy. We see it in disputes over climate change and gender identity and abortion.

In each of these cases, the adherents of scientism argue that experts in the field have fully comprehended some matter of social concern.

For COVID-19, it’s the infectious disease experts at the Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention. For climate change, it’s NASA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Gender identity is the concern of the American Psychiatric Association. In recognizing a constitutional right to abortion in *Roe v. Wade*, Justice Harry A. Blackmun, former counsel for the Mayo Clinic, mentioned the word “physician” 48 times.

I say “scientism” rather than “science” because there is an almost religious commitment to the creed defined by the experts. And a corresponding resolution to stamp out heresies.

Last year, President Biden’s press secretary said the White House was working with Facebook to prevent disinformation about vaccines. Google and YouTube banned ads from videos contradicting “well-established scientific consensus” about the causes of climate change. Amazon pulled Ryan Anderson’s book about transgenderism.

And as with other varieties of religious commitment, scientism commits us to a moral code. You’re not just mistaken if you don’t follow the directions of the experts; you’re a bad person. Hence the phenomenon of COVID-shaming and Greta Thunberg’s denunciation of the “injustice” of climate change.

But science can’t tell us anything about moral responsibility. Its tools are logic and empirical measurement. It can assess whether mRNA vaccines work, and how fast the omicron variant spreads.

But it has no way to solve moral equations like how to weigh the risk of this infection against the importance of visiting the sick, going to church, educating your children, respecting privacy, kissing your grandmother.

Experts tend to picture the world with their own specialty in the foreground. My nephrologist tells me not to drink milk, lest I get kidney stones. He forgets that I need calcium and vitamin D for bones and teeth. Scientism suffers from the same cognitive bias in dealing with COVID-19. Minimizing the risk of infection is not our only challenge in life.

(John Garvey is president of The Catholic University of America in Washington. Follow him on Twitter @CatholicPres.) †

Letters to the Editor

Pope’s vaccine message reminds us of moral issue to care for our neighbor

Thank you for publishing on the front page of the Jan. 14 issue of *The Criterion* the recent words of Pope Francis on the urgent need for a “reality check” against baseless information and for increased efforts so everyone has access to vaccines, medicines and diagnostic tools.

He urged the importance of immunizing as many people as possible to fight the epidemic, which he called “a

grave moment in the life of humanity.”

I hope this will be of help to those who have hesitation about vaccines for religious reasons. The moral issue here is care for our neighbor, as each of us has an obligation to help combat the scourge which has resulted in so much suffering and loss of life.

Ellen Healey
Indianapolis

Reader: Don’t let your ‘true north’ get knocked off course by selfish motives

I enjoyed Father Eugene Hemrick’s column in the Jan. 14 edition of *The Criterion* about re-setting our collective moral compass.

He said much of today’s moral malfunctions are a result of our compasses’ “true north” setting being knocked off and replaced by our “true self” and selfish, self-centered, “me first” settings.

In a modern, rich, luxurious and enabled society, truth as a thing, as an absolute, gets replaced by my truth, my version, my opinion.

Nowhere has this been more obvious than in and during the COVID-19 pandemic, as many people have held to the idea that COVID-19 was and is “fake news,” and that they “have the right” to

simply ignore it, and that if they do, this ignoring equates with immunity.

A recent Netflix movie about a comet hitting Earth exemplified this same point, as millions worldwide thought an impending, fact-supported comet strike of Earth was a subject of pop opinion and vote. It wasn’t.

I pray we all have the time and willingness to reset our own compasses, and replace opinions, versions, spin jobs and self with truth, facts, science and putting others first: all of which will point to and lead us individually and collectively back to the true north of God.

Sonny Shanks
Corydon



Christ the Cornerstone

Love seeks the other's good, desires closeness

"Love is a binding force, by which another is joined to me and cherished by myself. ... The things that we love tell us what we are." (St. Thomas Aquinas)

Friday, Jan. 28, our Church invites us to remember St. Thomas Aquinas, a brilliant thinker and teacher, and a humble, holy man whose teaching has inspired many generations of faithful Christians. It is said that at the end of Thomas' life, the Lord asked him what he wanted as a reward for his faithful service. "Only you," was his immediate response.

In making this reply, St. Thomas was practicing what he preached. In his sermons and other writings on the nature of love, Thomas identified two primary characteristics of the virtue of love: First, love always seeks the good of another, what is truly best for the person who is loved. Second, a lover seeks to be united as closely as possible with his or her beloved; a real lover cannot bear to be separated from the one who is loved. These two fundamental characteristics, goodness and unity, define true love. Where one or the other are missing, love is weak or absent.

Nowhere does St. Thomas teach that love is selfish or self-gratifying. The picture often given by our culture distorts the understanding of love that we find in the words and example of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the lives of the holy women and men who share with us their experiences of loving and being loved. We Christians believe that real love involves sacrifice, the willingness to give up our own needs and desires for the good of another. Real love also seeks unity with the beloved.

First and foremost, of course, we long to be united with God, who loved us so much that he sacrificed his only Son, Jesus Christ, for the good of our salvation.

Union with the triune God, and with all our sisters and brothers in Christ, is the ultimate objective of Christian love. As we grow in love, we seek the good of others more intensely, and we gradually draw closer to genuine unity with God and with all humanity.

Jesus Christ is the lover *par excellence*. His whole life and ministry was dedicated to helping others—the poor, the sick, the suffering in mind and heart, the persecuted, and shunned

outcasts. Even the self-deluded "righteous" people find what is truly best for them in Jesus' preaching and pastoral care. What's more, the Gospels reveal how deeply our Lord longed for unity with his Father, with his scattered flock, and with the entire human family: "That they may be one, Father, as you and I are one" (Jn 17:21). Jesus always sought the good. He always wanted to be close to us, and to draw us into the loving relationship that he has with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

The twin characteristics of love that St. Thomas Aquinas taught—goodness and unity—are a useful guide in our own examination of conscience. In our daily reflections, we should ask ourselves: Do I really seek what is best for my family, setting aside my own needs and desires for the sake of those I love? How effectively do I demonstrate my desire to be close to the people I love? Am I distant, unresponsive or not totally interested in the lives of others?

Once we have looked at the quality of our love for those closest to us, we should ask similar questions about our relationship with those who are outside our inner circle. What about

our neighbors, our fellow citizens or strangers? Do we really want what's best for them—even if it inconveniences us? Do we seek to grow closer to the people who are distant from us culturally, ethnically, politically or religiously?

True love demands that we change our hearts and our actions. It requires us to let the Holy Spirit guide our thoughts and our behavior so that we can "put on Christ" and be women and men for others.

Let's ask St. Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor, to intercede for us. May the twin characteristics of love be manifest in our daily lives, and may we recognize true love in ourselves and in others as signs of God's closeness to us and of his desire for what is truly good for us.

And let's pray together in the words used in today's Mass from the collect for the memorial of St. Thomas Aquinas, Jan. 28:

O God, who made Saint Thomas Aquinas outstanding in his zeal for holiness and his study of sacred doctrine, grant us, we pray, that we may understand what he taught and imitate what he accomplished. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

El amor busca el bien del otro y desea la cercanía

"El amor es una fuerza que unifica, por la cual el otro se une a mí y yo lo amo. ... Lo que amamos nos dice quiénes somos." (Santo Tomás de Aquino)

El viernes 28 de enero nuestra Iglesia nos invita a recordar a santo Tomás de Aquino, brillante pensador y maestro, hombre humilde y santo, cuya enseñanza ha inspirado a muchas generaciones de fieles cristianos. Se dice que al final de la vida de Tomás, el Señor le preguntó qué quería como recompensa por su fiel servicio. "Solo a ti," fue su respuesta inmediata.

Al dar esta respuesta, santo Tomás practicaba lo que predicaba. En sus sermones y otros escritos sobre la naturaleza del amor, Tomás identificó dos características principales de la virtud del amor: en primer lugar, el amor busca siempre el bien del otro, lo que es verdaderamente mejor para el ser amado. En segundo lugar, un amante busca estar unido lo más estrechamente posible al ser amado; un verdadero amante no soporta estar separado del ser amado. Estas dos características fundamentales, la bondad y la unidad, definen el verdadero amor. Cuando faltan uno u otro, el amor es débil o está ausente.

Santo Tomás no enseña en ninguna parte que el amor sea egoísta o que busque la autogratificación. La

imagen que suele dar nuestra cultura distorsiona la comprensión del amor que encontramos en las palabras y el ejemplo de nuestro Señor Jesucristo, y en la vida de las mujeres y los hombres santos que comparten con nosotros sus experiencias de amar y ser amados. Los cristianos creemos que el verdadero amor implica sacrificio, la voluntad de renunciar a nuestras propias necesidades y deseos por el bien del otro. El verdadero amor también busca la unidad con el amado.

En primer lugar, por supuesto, anhelamos estar unidos a Dios, que nos amó tanto que sacrificó a su único Hijo, Jesucristo, por el bien de nuestra salvación.

La unión con el Dios trino, y con todos nuestros hermanos y hermanas en Cristo, es el objetivo último del amor cristiano. A medida que crecemos en el amor, buscamos más intensamente el bien de los demás, y nos acercamos gradualmente a la auténtica unidad con Dios y con toda la humanidad.

Jesucristo es el amante por excelencia; su vida entera y su ministerio estuvieron dedicados a ayudar a los demás: a los pobres, a los enfermos, a los que sufren de mente y corazón, a los perseguidos y a los marginados. Incluso los «justos» que se autoengañan encuentran lo que es

verdaderamente mejor para ellos en la predicación y la atención pastoral de Jesús. Además, los Evangelios revelan el profundo anhelo de nuestro Señor por la unidad con su Padre, con su rebaño disperso y con toda la familia humana: "para que todos sean uno. Padre, así como tú estás en mí y yo en ti" (Jn 17:21). Jesús siempre buscó el bien, estar cerca de nosotros y atraernos a la relación de amor que tiene con el Padre y el Espíritu Santo.

Las dos características del amor que nos enseñó santo Tomás de Aquino (bondad y unidad) son una guía útil en nuestro propio examen de conciencia. En nuestras reflexiones diarias, deberíamos preguntarnos: ¿Busco realmente lo mejor para mi familia y dejo de lado mis propias necesidades y deseos por el bien de los que amo? ¿Cómo demuestro eficazmente mi deseo de estar cerca de las personas que quiero? ¿Estoy distante, no respondo o no estoy totalmente interesado en la vida de los demás?

Una vez que hayamos examinado la calidad de nuestro amor por nuestros seres queridos más cercanos, deberíamos plantearnos preguntas similares sobre nuestra relación con los que están fuera de nuestro círculo íntimo. ¿Qué pasa con nuestros vecinos, nuestros conciudadanos o extraños? ¿En verdad deseamos lo mejor para

ellos, incluso si eso nos incomoda? ¿Buscamos acercarnos a las personas que están alejadas de nosotros desde el punto de vista cultural, étnico, político o religioso?

El verdadero amor exige que cambiemos nuestros corazones y acciones. Requiere que dejemos que el Espíritu Santo guíe nuestros pensamientos y nuestro comportamiento para que podamos "revestirnos de Cristo" y ser mujeres y hombres al servicio de los demás.

Pidamos a santo Tomás de Aquino, el Doctor Angélico, que interceda por nosotros. Que las dos características del amor se manifiesten en nuestra vida cotidiana, y que reconozcamos el verdadero amor en nosotros mismos y en los demás como signos de la cercanía de Dios con nosotros y de su deseo de lo que es verdaderamente bueno para nosotros.

Y recemos juntos con las palabras utilizadas en la misa de hoy, tomadas de la colecta para el memorial de santo Tomás de Aquino, el 28 de enero:

Oh Dios, que hiciste a santo Tomás de Aquino destacado en su celo por la santidad y su estudio de la doctrina sagrada, te pedimos que nos concedas entender lo que él enseñó e imitar lo que logró. †

Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/events.

February 4

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., Father Michael Block (Lafayette Diocese) celebrating, optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, www.womenscarecenter.org.

February 8, March 8

Church of the Immaculate Conception, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. **Taizé Prayer at the Woods**, 7-8 p.m., silent and spoken prayers, simple music, silence, virtual option available at cutt.ly/Taize. Information: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org.

February 9, 23

March 9, 23

Group Lectio via Zoom, 7 p.m., second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, Benedictine Sister Jill Marie Reuber, facilitator, sponsored

by Sisters of St. Benedict, Ferdinand, Ind. (Diocese of Evansville). Information: vocation@thedome.org.

February 12, March 12

Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. **Teen Volunteering Opportunity**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., ages 12-18, assist with retired Providence Sisters. Information and registration: 812-535-2952, provctr@spsmw.org or spsmw.org/events.

February 16, March 16

Calvary Mausoleum Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

February 17, March 17

St. Joseph Church, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis.

Third Thursday Adoration

interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m. Information: 317-244-9002.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass**, 2 p.m.

Information: 317-574-8898 or www.catholiccemeteries.cc.

February 18

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, presenter TBA, rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$18 members, \$24 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Feb. 15. Information and registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

February 19

St. Michael the Archangel

Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Helpers of God's Most Precious Infants Prayer Vigil for Life**, 8:30 a.m. Mass, then prayer partners will carpool to Clinic for Women at 3607 W. 16th St. for vigil. Information: eric@romancatholicgentleman.com.

February 21, March 21

Sr. Thea Bowman Black Catholic Women Monthly Prayer Gathering, via Zoom, third Monday of each month, sponsored by archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry, 7 p.m. Join meeting: cutt.ly/SrTheaPrayer, meeting ID: 810 3567 0684 or dial-in at 301-715-8592. Information: Pearlette Springer, pspringer@archindy.org or 317-236-1474.

February 26

East Central High School Performing Arts Center, 1 Trojan Place, St. Leon. **E6 Catholic Men's Conference**,

8 a.m.-3:30 p.m., doors open 6:30 a.m., talks begin 8 a.m., presenters include author Matthew Kelly, Catholic radio host Gus Lloyd and Father Jonathan Meyer, online option available, clergy and religious free, \$10 livestream, \$25 high school and college students, \$40 general admission. Information and registration: ecatholicmensconference.com.

March 4

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., Father John McCaslin celebrating, optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, www.womenscarecenter.org.

March 12

St. Joan of Arc Parish, 4217 N. Central Ave., Indianapolis. **13th Annual Men's Lenten Prayer Breakfast**, 8-10 a.m., Mass followed by breakfast

with talk by Father James Farrell, confession available 10-11 a.m., free. Information and registration: Barry Pachciarz, pachciarz@sbcglobal.net or 317-442-5542.

March 18

Northside Events and Social Club, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, presenter TBA, rosary 6:35 a.m., Mass 7 a.m., buffet breakfast and program following, \$18 members, \$24 non-members. Register by 4 p.m. on Mar. 15. Information and registration: cutt.ly/CBE-Reg.

March 26

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Catholic Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Faithful Citizens Rosary Walk**, 10:45-11:45 a.m., meet in front of church. Information: faithful.citizens2016@gmail.com. †

Retreats and Programs

For a complete list of retreats as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/retreats.

February 9

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Personal Day of Retreat**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., \$40, includes a private room for the day and

lunch; spiritual direction is available for an additional \$30, must be scheduled in advance. Information and registration: benedictinn.org/programs, 317-788-7581, benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

February 11-13

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Guesthouse, 200 Hill Dr., St. Meinrad. **Beyond the Fantastic!**, for married couples, Benedictine Father Noël Mueller presenting,

\$425 double. Registration: saintmeinrad.org/retreats.

February 12

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Pilgrimage: Charity**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., walking hike pilgrimage lead by Conventual Franciscan Father Vincent Petersen, bring water bottle and lunch, rain or shine, \$25. Information and registration:

mountsaintfrancis.org/pilgrimage or 812-923-8817.

February 14

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **"Brother Bob's Bible Study"** Mondays 10:30 a.m. or 6:30 p.m., led by Andrew Hennessy, free. Information and registration: mountsaintfrancis.org/bible-study or 812-923-8817.

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Day of Silence**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$35 per day, includes room, continental breakfast, lunch and use of the common areas and grounds, overnight stays available for additional \$28 per person, dinner additional \$9. Registration: cutt.ly/fatimaretreats, 317-545-7681 or jburger@archindy.org. †

Advance care planning conference to take place near Indianapolis on Feb. 12

"A Loving Gift: Advanced Care Planning Conference" will take place just north of Indianapolis in the social hall at St. Elizabeth Seton Parish, 10655 Haverstick Road, in Carmel, Ind. (Lafayette Diocese), from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on Feb. 12, with doors opening at 9:30 a.m.

Having health care and end-of-life discussions with loved ones is difficult and often ignored. Advance Care Planning (ACP) is a means for discussing, exploring and sharing your desired health care choices with others. ACP promotes making decisions based on the medical issues, goals of health care, faith and personal values.

The workshop will examine topics such as: exploring who will speak for you if you are unable; designating a health care representative who can make decisions for you; and most importantly, deciding how you want to live your life as it nears its end are just a few of the critical questions that need answering while you are able. Speakers and topics include:

- Father James Farrell, sacramental minister at St. Rita and Holy Angels parishes, both in Indianapolis, addressing the topic from a pastoral point of view.

- Elliott Bedford, director of Ethics Integration for Ascension St. Vincent in Central and Southern Indiana, examining the ethical perspective while preserving human dignity.

- Carol Applegate, lawyer, discussing the legal aspects of ACP in terms of life care planning and legal documentation.

- Jan Gaddis, faith community nurse for Franciscan Health, presenting on the clinical perspectives, including medical decision forms and what they mean.

The panel discussion will be followed by time for questions and answers, and light refreshments will be served.

The conference is free, but seating is limited to 100 and registration is required.

To register go to bit.ly/hm-advancedcareplanning.

For more information, call 317-669-1973 or email tricialp@gmail.com. †

Mount Saint Francis will offer 'Watch One Hour with Me' Women's Retreat on Feb. 26

A women's retreat titled "Watch One Hour with Me" will be offered at Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., in Mt. St. Francis, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on Feb. 26.

In preparation for Lent this year, gift yourself with a day at the Mount with other women. The focus of this retreat will be prayer, and touching on the Scriptures when Jesus went off to pray.

During the day, traditional prayers and rituals will be shared, prayers of various saints and mystics will be explored, and time will be taken for meditation and quiet prayer.

The retreat includes opportunities for the sacrament of reconciliation, and will end with the Sunday Vigil Mass.

Those interested in a longer retreat may choose to stay Saturday night into Sunday morning, joining others in the Divine Office and centering prayer.

The cost for the retreat is \$50. The cost for an optional overnight stay on Saturday is an additional \$100, which includes a private room and meals.

For more information or to register, go to mountsaintfrancis.org/womens-retreat or call 812-923-8817. †

Documentary, discussion on gender reassignment trend set for Feb. 11 in Indy

The documentary *Transmission: What's the Rush to Reassign Gender?* will be viewed and discussed in St. John Parish Hall on the first floor of the PanAm building across from St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., in Indianapolis, from 6:30-9:30 p.m. on Feb. 11.

The documentary is part of a pro-life film series sponsored by

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary and St. John the Evangelist parishes, both in Indianapolis.

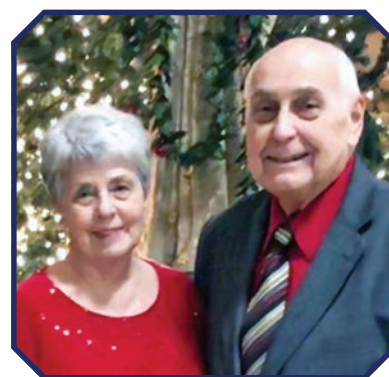
A panel discussion will follow the viewing of the documentary.

All are welcome. There is no need to register, and the event is free, although freewill offerings will be accepted.

For more information, call 317-407-6881 or e-mail smdye1@gmail.com. †

Wedding Anniversary

JIM AND JODI ERLENBAUGH



Jim and Jodi (Chesterson) Erlenbaugh, members of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on Feb. 3.

The couple was married in St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) Church on Feb. 3, 1962.

They have four children: Jennifer Elrod, Julia Wallpe, Jeff and Jim Erlenbaugh.

The couple also has eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. †

Events and retreats can be submitted to The Criterion by logging on to www.archindy.org/events/submission, or by mailing us at 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202, ATTN: Ann Lewis, or by fax at 317-236-1593.

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to cutt.ly/anniversaries or call 317-236-1585.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK SUPPLEMENT



Catholic schools: Sharing the mission of Jesus Christ and celebrating an education that transforms the heart, mind and soul

DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST,

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis takes great pride in its long history of Catholic formation and education. Catholic Schools Week provides a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the blessing of Catholic schools in individual lives, families and communities throughout central and southern Indiana. Within its 39 counties, the archdiocese boasts of 68 Catholic grade and high schools as well as two Catholic seminaries and two Catholic universities.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

The national theme for Catholic Schools Week—*Faith, Excellence, Service*—highlights the transformational mission of Catholic schools; namely, a holistic concept of developing

the spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical character of each student through ongoing formation and education.

The focus of Catholic schools, both inside and outside the classroom, includes the formation of the heart as well as the education of the mind. The development of morals and faith leading to Christ-centered witness in worship and service, as referenced in our theme, is central to this mission. Our concern is for every aspect of the person, but especially with salvation of the soul.

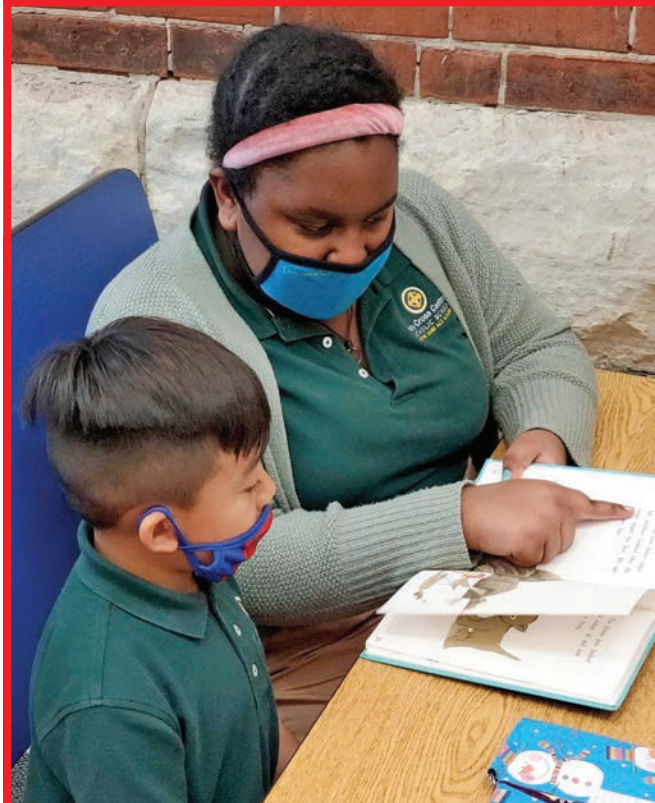
We take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to all those who make our Catholic schools what they are for us. Special thanks to all those serving in our schools—presidents, principals, faculty, staff, coaches and volunteers—as well as the tremendous team that makes up our archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools. The greatest ambassadors of our Catholic schools, of course, are our students and their families.

Your witness of faith, in both word and action, is the most inspiring means of highlighting the value of Catholic schools.

Ultimately, as the crucifix in every classroom is meant to remind us, we must always keep before us that our Catholic schools exist to carry forth the mission of Jesus Christ in proclaiming the kingdom of God at hand and bringing about the good news of salvation. All for the glory of God, we have much to celebrate!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

MOST REVEREND CHARLES C. THOMPSON
ARCHBISHOP OF INDIANAPOLIS





A surprising choice leads a family to a school and a faith-filled community that they cherish

By John Shaughnessy

When LaDarius Mathis finished his time of service in the

U.S. Army, he and his wife Vanessa were at a point where they could choose wherever they wanted their family to live. The choice they made—and the reason they made it—would surprise many people.

After all, they could have returned to the Dallas, Texas, area where they had both grown up and still have families who live there.

They could have also chosen from some of the scenic areas which had been part of their lives during the nine years LaDarius served in the Army—including Colorado, New Mexico and Virginia.

Instead, they made their choice based on this reason:

During the nearly two years when LaDarius served at Camp Atterbury in Indiana—from 2014-16—the couple and their children felt so completely at home at Our Lady of the Greenwood School that they hated to leave when LaDarius was required to move to an Army base in Colorado. Longing to return to that Catholic community, they did just that in 2019.

“Everyone welcomed us with open arms the first time we moved here. I got the warm and fuzzies then, and my heart has always been here ever since,” Vanessa says. “When we moved back here, we almost pinched ourselves. ‘Is this real? Did we make this happen?’ I needed a sense of community, and we have it here. We’ve never been so happy.”

Her happiness includes being the social studies teacher for the middle school students at Our Lady of the Greenwood, where three of their four children attend. Bryce is in the eighth grade, Christian the first grade, and Madison in the pre-kindergarten class. Their oldest child, LaDarius, a graduate of Our Lady of the Greenwood, is a freshman at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis.

“This is my dream job,” says Vanessa, who also coaches boys’ basketball and volleyball at the school. “I get to be with my kids, and there are awesome kids here. This is why we moved back—because of this school. My

daughter loves the movie *Frozen*. As Olaf said in *Frozen*, ‘I’m living the dream.’”

A substantial part of the dream for her is that she gets to teach in a Catholic school and her children get to receive a Catholic education.

“Our kids have always gone to Catholic schools,” she says. “I’ve always liked the discipline that’s being instilled, the expectations, the fact that they can go to Mass and see everybody go to Mass as part of the school. With going to Mass being a routine part of life for them, I hope that will carry over into their adult life.”

She also savors being able to talk to her students about God.

“Whenever we talk about God, we can have an open conversation about God,” she says. “Kids this age have doubts. They have so many outside forces from the secular world. It’s so cool that we can have these conversations about God, that we can talk about their doubts. If I don’t have the answers, I can talk to a priest and get answers for them.”

That approach dovetails with another role she has at the school—as a member of the Jesus Squad. It’s a group of teachers who meet regularly with the parish’s pastor, Father Todd Goodson, to enhance the Catholic identity of the school.

“How can we truly live by our Catholic faith?” she says, summarizing the question that guides the group. “We meet with Father Todd to talk about the needs of the students. I think it’s pretty cool that I’m on the Jesus Squad.”



Vanessa and LaDarius Mathis have found a home for their family at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood. Here, the couple poses for a family photo with their children, LaDarius, Jr., left, Madison, Christian and Bryce. (Submitted photo)

The school community feels blessed that Vanessa is part of the staff, says principal Kent Clady.

“She’s just a natural,” he says. “I love that she treats the kids as she treats her own children. She teaches them as a teacher, but loves them as a mom. She holds them to the same expectations she has for her own children, and I love that about her. She’s a gift to us, for sure.”

“I’m glad God brought her and her family back to us. They could have gone anywhere in the United States as a family. They decided they wanted to be here. We’re glad they are.”

So is the Mathis family.

“We feel blessed to be here,” Vanessa says. “This place feels like home. We’re loving it.” †

Mentor program adds joy to the present and hope for the future

By John Shaughnessy

The dreams of Logan and Sebastian have created a bond between them, right down to the smiles and laughs they share in making a batch of greenish-blue slime together.

At 18, Logan Cucuz is a freshman at Marian University in Indianapolis who dreams of becoming a nurse on a pediatric unit, caring for children and helping them return to good health.

At 11, Sebastian is a sixth-grade student at Holy Angels School in Indianapolis who hopes to become the first person in his family to go to college in the future.

Their lives have become intertwined this school year through College Mentors for Kids, an Indianapolis-based national program that strives to transform the lives of children and college students “through weekly on-campus activities that inspire growth, confidence and brighter futures.”

Every Thursday, about 25 third- to sixth-grade students at Holy Angels board a bus to go to Marian University for after-school activities that connect them in one-on-one relationships with Marian students.

Their time together includes a snack and a fun bonding project, but the program is always focused on giving the grade-school students a connection with a college campus and a look at careers and an education that could change their lives someday. There is also the emphasis on creating a bond between the child and the college student—like the one between Sebastian and Logan.

“He’s really fun to get along with,” says Sebastian, whose last name isn’t mentioned here because that’s the policy of the College Mentors for Kids program regarding the grade school students. “And all the activities are fun, too.”

Sebastian shares that he’s one of four children who live with their mom. He also mentions that at this point in his life he wants to be a video game programmer or a graphic designer.

Logan is already focused on his future path.

“I’m a nursing major,” he says. “I’d like to go into pediatrics. I like to work with kids, coming down to their level and collaborating with them. I thought this program would be perfect, and it is.”

“You learn how to deal with the million different things that are going on for a kid. And Sebastian likes the same things as me. Being a role model is a really good experience.”

After the snack to begin their time together on this day, Sebastian and Logan listen as a Marian team leader reads from a children’s book that stresses the importance of working hard to achieve a goal. Then there’s the science activity of making slime together, followed later by a focus on possible careers.

During other weeks, the Holy Angels students have also listened to presentations from Marian students of different backgrounds who talked about their experiences and their cultures.

The College Mentors for Kids program makes a major difference in the lives of the children at Holy Angels School, says principal Justin Armitage.

“Our scholars get an opportunity to be paired with a college student, do fun activities and go to a college campus once a week,” Armitage says. “The opportunity for our scholars to spend time on a college campus is priceless. Many of our scholars only know their neighborhood. They do not have an opportunity to travel to different places and see different things.”

“Being on a college campus with college students that come from all over the state and country provides them with



The smiles show the bond that has formed between Logan Cucuz, a freshman at Marian University in Indianapolis, and Sebastian, a sixth-grade student at Holy Angels School in Indianapolis, through the College Mentors for Kids program. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

inspiration and motivation to want to do well in school, go onto a good high school and then college or technical school.

“We have many programs here at Holy Angels for our scholars to participate in, but the excitement the scholars that are involved in College Mentors have when Thursday rolls around is unmatched.”

At the same time, the program has created “a love of Holy Angels” for many of the Marian students involved in it, Armitage says.

“Some come back to volunteer in our after-care program, some come back to assist in classrooms, some decide to be tutors during the school week,” the principal says.

“College Mentors has been an integral piece to the transformation of Holy

Angels over the past four years. It is beneficial to the Marian students, to our school, to our community and most importantly to the lives of our scholars.”

The program also gives the grade-school student and the college student the opportunity to smile and laugh together, to bond, says Anna Johannigman, the vice president of the Marian chapter of College Mentors for Kids and a member of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg.

“It’s really great to see how that relationship forms between the two,” Johannigman says. “I think the mentors gain a sense of being able to have that connection with a child. Everyone has a mentor in their life. To have the ability to encourage someone is special.” †

Relying on his faith in a time of fear brings a student closer to God, his school community and the purpose for his life

By John Shaughnessy

Patrick Van Gheem recalls it as one of the toughest times of his life, a time when he turned to God and the community of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis for help.

“I don’t talk about it too much, but there are many points at which I relied on my faith,” says Patrick, a senior at Cardinal Ritter. “Born prematurely, one of my brothers remained in the newborn intensive care unit for weeks.

“In those moments, it became difficult for me to get up for school knowing that he was still fighting for his life at that moment. The worst part was knowing that the outcome

of whether he would recover or stay in the hospital was out of my control. But the best part was knowing that my brother was in the care of two groups of people I trusted very greatly: health care professionals and, of course, God and the saints in heaven.

“This moment gave me comfort in my faith, knowing that God was there for me every day. I saw it in the community of Ritter, praying for my brother. I relied on my faith in that moment, and I am glad to say God came through. My brother is alive and well now.”

Patrick believes his faith will continue to serve him as he strives to pursue a career as a doctor.

Catholic teaching “is to not give

abortions, refuse euthanasia and care for every patient,” he says. “These beliefs will allow me to be a better doctor and a better person in the future.”

His four years at Cardinal Ritter have developed his faith, strengthened his relationship with God and prepared him for the future he envisions, he says.

“My education has shown me ways that I can utilize my faith in everyday life. The biggest examples are the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Cardinal Ritter has taught me to value each human. By using these works of mercy, I have been able to find volunteering opportunities through the way of my faith. That, to me, defines my education at Cardinal Ritter.” †



Learning lessons in respect and love—and sharing them with others

By John Shaughnessy

Even though Tyrone Davis isn’t Catholic, he still embraces the difference that a Catholic education has made in the formative years of his life.

“I believe that having a Catholic education is very important because it teaches you important moral virtues such as honesty, respect and compassion,” says Tyrone, a senior at Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville.

“I myself wasn’t born and raised a Catholic, with my mom being Eastern Orthodox. However, going to Catholic schools most of my life has taught me

humility and how to show care, love and respect toward other people, because you never know what the next person might be going through at home. They might have a hard life, so going out of your way to show kindness can go a long way.”

Tyrone says he especially used that approach during his junior year at Providence when the challenges of COVID-19 were having an impact.

“It felt as if everyone was dealing with something, and it was hard to find reasons to smile and be happy,” he recalls.

“I continued to show love and respect toward everyone I know and met—and tried to be their reason to smile. Whether it was

a nice compliment, or a funny joke, or me being outright dumb just to get a laugh out of someone, I think this community and the whole world needed a little bit of that.”

As much as he has tried to do for the Providence community, Tyrone knows how much the school has done for him.

“I think that my Providence education will continue to serve me well in the future. Not only have I been taught great and important moral virtues by which to live, Providence also has a top-tier academic education.

“I’m hoping that I can use the valuable lessons that I learn here to continue to develop my own successful career.” †



Senior learns to lean on others—and to reach out to them to help

By John Shaughnessy

Like many students, Natalie Priser has felt the influence of COVID-19 in her life. The senior at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis has also seen the impact it’s had on her faith and her appreciation of her Catholic education.

“The past year has really pushed me to rely on my faith, especially in the unknown times where I had to trust God that everything would work out,” Natalie says.

“Catholic education is something that sometimes I may take for granted, but then I think about what life would be like without having attended Christ the King School or Bishop Chatard, and I

realize that everything would be different. I wouldn’t have as many opportunities to meet people who share the same faith, and I wouldn’t have a group of people that I know I can lean on when it comes to my faith.”

Her four years at Bishop Chatard have not only led her to lean on people who share her faith, but to learn how to use her faith to reach out to others.

“In addition to having theology classes, each class really focuses on bringing in matters of faith and connecting it to certain lessons, which has encouraged me to see how my faith can play a role in such a variety of different matters.

“I have become very actively involved

in the campus ministry program at Bishop Chatard this year. Through campus ministry, as well as the help of fellow students, I had the opportunity to create my own program called ‘Service Ministries,’ which has helped me to see how I can connect my values of service with my love for being involved at Chatard. The Catholic education at Chatard has encouraged me to become more involved in my community.”

She has no doubt that foundation will continue into her future.

“The importance of service has been stressed in a way that I know will help me to continue living in a way that focuses on helping others.” †



Catholic school educators are the hands, feet and eyes of Christ

By Brian Disney

Superintendent of Catholic schools in the archdiocese

Catholic schools in the archdiocese provide an exemplary academic education, but they also provide so much more. Built on the foundation of Jesus Christ, our Catholic schools are a vibrant ministry of the Catholic Church where students are taught and inspired to excel in their lives on Earth and to live eternally with God in heaven. As with any outstanding organization, the people in our schools—teachers, staff members, pastors, students and families—live this mission every day.

Our Catholic schools excel on every measure of academic success, including state and national assessments, graduation rates and college acceptance rates. Our graduates become leaders in government, business, education, technology, engineering and so much more. Our schools are recognized for teaching critical thinking and instilling strong values. Our Catholic schools are appreciated for the value they bring to students, families and communities.

The outstanding academic education in our Catholic schools is infused with Gospel values. Guided by our Catholic identity and mission, we believe in the

full potential of each of our students. Therefore, we intentionally focus on the growth and development of the whole human person: spiritual, physical, mental and social.

Our primary task is to form Catholic men and women and to show non-Catholics the beauty of living for and with Christ. Our students learn to discern the voice of God by utilizing their gifts to make the world a better place and to build up the kingdom of God. Our Catholic schools maintain their purpose through constant references to the Gospel and frequent encounters with Christ. Our Catholic faith is the basis for all these successes.

This high-quality education would not be possible without our amazing educators who live the mission of Catholic schools every day. I have been blessed with the opportunity to visit almost half of our 68 schools during this school year. On these visits, I have observed our teachers and staffs living this quote of St. Teresa of Avila: “Christ has no body now on Earth but yours, no hands, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes with which Christ looks his compassion to the world. Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good.”

Our Catholic schools are places to encounter Christ in the sacraments and in the employees, students and volunteers.

Our teachers and staffs are of utmost importance in developing the distinctive mission of our Catholic schools. Our pastors and priests serve as the spiritual leaders of their school communities. Our school leaders provide educational and spiritual growth opportunities

for students and staff members. Our teachers are full of Christian wisdom, have strong knowledge of their academic content, have a love for young people and are committed to guiding students to the heart of Christ. Our support staffs and volunteers in the office and cafeteria are welcoming voices and faces committed to service.

The entire school community shares the vision of a whole-child educational experience built on the foundation of Christ and the Gospel. Our Catholic school educators are the hands, feet and eyes of Christ every day.

If you are interested in your child being formed and taught in one of our amazing Catholic schools, please contact your local school office.

If you would like to work in this wonderful and supportive environment, contact our schools or visit the archdiocese’s Office of Catholic Schools webpage, ocs.archindy.org.

If you would like to thank Catholic school educators for their Christian witness and work, send them a card, donate to the school or parish in their name, and pray for them.

God bless our Catholic school educators! †



Brian Disney





First-time Catholic school teachers describe their experience as 'positive' and 'wonderful'

By Natalie Hoefler

to his job in Bedford. The drive takes nearly an hour-and-a-half.

But the member of St. John the Baptist Parish in Starlight doesn't mind.

"I wake up so excited to come to work," he says. "And I'm willing to make the drive because I love this job so much!"

Pangburn teaches middle school English and social studies at St. Vincent de Paul School in Bedford. It's his first professional job, having graduated from Indiana University in Bloomington last May.

He went to public schools, but "always loved my faith and felt a deep connection to it," says Pangburn. "So when the opportunity to teach at St. Vincent de Paul came up, I was very excited to take it."

So far, he calls his experience teaching at the Catholic school "absolutely wonderful."

"I love the community. I love the kids. I love how the school's purpose is not just education, but also showing good morals.

"As teachers, we act out the morals and teachings that Christ has given us by being examples of how we're supposed to act and behave. It's about reminding [students] what they're supposed to do and encouraging them when they are living out those ideals."

Pangburn says the approach works.

"You can really see how effective we are in how the kids behave," he says.

He also appreciates the many opportunities students have to engage with their faith.

"It's not just going to Mass," he says. "Even in homeroom, we take an hour every Friday to read and discuss Scripture."

Unlike Pangburn, Mariah Mott has a varied background in teaching. She has taught at a charter school and at a school for children with behavioral issues.

But the new kindergarten teacher for St. Patrick School in Terre Haute says teaching for the Catholic school has been her best experience yet.

She had a good impression of the school even before starting as a teacher there last fall.

"I have a friend who works here and two friends who have kids who go here who always talk about there being such a positive environment here where kids both learn about faith and academics," said Mott. "I like seeing kids grow in both areas."

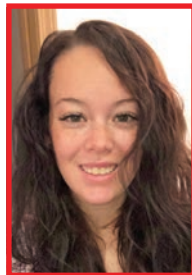
She has found St. Patrick School to be "very positive and more nurturing than public schools.

"There, you go to the principal's office or get detention [for misbehaving.] Here, it's more, 'Let's talk through this,' and making that relationship with Jesus real so kids are able to understand why their action was wrong. When you just say, 'Don't do that,' they won't learn and they'll keep having those bad behaviors."

Mott, who worships at Whitesville Christian Church in Crawfordsville, Ind., appreciates being able to put her shared Christian values into practice as a teacher at St. Patrick.

"Using what's positive and inspiring to them is what I really, really like," she said. "Just today I had one student say they didn't want to play with another student because [that student was] mean.

"I was able to ask the kids, 'Was everyone nice to Jesus?'—'No.' 'Was Jesus nice to everyone?'—'Yes.' 'This is why we need to be nice to everyone like Jesus.'"



Mariah Mott



Richard Pangburn teaches a middle school social studies class at St. Vincent de Paul School in Bedford. (Submitted photo)

Mott notes that the school's teachers educate the students in math, reading, social studies, science and more.

"But we also teach them to have positive relationships in a holy way, and teach them those skills they can use every year in grade school and high school and beyond school." †

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A football coach shares his game plan of faith with his players, striving to lead them to a relationship with God

By John Shaughnessy

Mark Bridges has this one great hope for the boys he coaches.

It goes beyond his desire as a U.S. Marine Corps veteran to teach them the values of respect and discipline.

It even goes beyond the challenge of taking youths from four parishes who don't know each other and transforming them into a team that's united and cares about each other.

His one great hope for his players is—well, here's a story that will explain it.

It's the story of one of his players during his 21 years of coaching football in the archdiocese's Catholic Youth Organization.

In his two years of playing for Bridges, the boy learned that his coach strives to make sharing his faith with his players as his main focus, from having them lead prayers after every practice to his Saturday post-practice ritual of reading the Bible with them and telling them stories of biblical figures.

During his second season of playing for Bridges, the boy was going through a tough time in his life.

"Sometimes when he would get upset, we'd have these conversations," Bridges says. "He told me he was going to buy a Bible so he can get closer to God. I asked his parents if I could have the honor of buying him his first Bible. They said I could. He would sit next to me when we did the readings on Saturdays.

"When the boys leave, what I want for them is to have a relationship with God that is going to last them a lot longer than their time playing football. I have had seven or eight players ask me to be their confirmation sponsor. To think a football coach can actually do this makes me feel so good. It's all about God."

Bridges has kept that focus on God in leading the Johnson County Knights, which draws together seventh- and eighth-grade boys from four parishes—Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Indianapolis, Our Lady of the Greenwood in Greenwood, SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi in Greenwood and St. Rose of Lima in Franklin.

Bringing the youths together as a team is one of Bridges' gifts, says Marianne Duncan, whose son Gino played for the Knights the past two seasons.

"At the first practice, the coaches notice that the players are in their 'own school' group talking," Duncan says. "As they train through the summer, players soon start to sweat, joke and laugh with one another. Coach emphasizes, 'We are a team. We are family. Lean on each other. Take care of each other.'

"He's a great coach, but he's an even better role model for 13- and 14-year-old boys. He's brought a moral and spiritual influence to these kids. He's all about God and family. I'm just so blessed to have had him coach my son for two years. His mentorship is going to last forever with my son."

Gino is just as enthusiastic about his coach, describing the Saturday morning Bible sessions as "one of my favorite times."

"He instills faith in football, which I love," says the eighth-grade student at Nativity School. "He taught me so much about the Bible in the past two years. He explains it in a way that kids can get. One of his favorite verses is Proverbs 14:23, 'All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty.' It basically means you have to work hard for everything you get.

"A lot of people say he's one of the biggest influences in their lives. He's a really great guy, a really great coach."

As a coach, Bridges and his assistants—Marty Sedgwick, Pat Soller and Ryan Benich—stress the importance of improving every day to their players.

"It's always about team and teamwork," says Bridges, a member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish who also coaches girls' and boys' volleyball there. "I tell them, 'We don't need heroes on our team. We need teammates doing heroic things.' We do a lot of fundamental training. We focus on getting better in every aspect we can think of."

That approach always centers on helping the boys grow in their faith.

"After every practice, we pray, and it's always player-led," says Bridges, who has been married for



Coach Mark Bridges and one of his players, Gino Duncan, are all smiles for a photo. (Submitted photo)

32 years to his wife Mary and has two adult daughters, Alexis and Erika.

"We tell the boys that we say prayer as a conversation with God. They do a phenomenal job. We ask for special intentions. At the beginning of the year, it's one or two intentions. By the end of the year, everybody has multiple intentions. I get goose bumps from it. I tell them, 'I love you guys. I love your faith.'"

Bridges says his own faith has deepened because of coaching the boys and researching the Bible passages and biblical stories that he shares with them.

"It's helped my faith explode. I'm so blessed to have this opportunity." †





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The story of a fork and what it holds for high school seniors regarding their future

By John Shaughnessy

school seniors from across the archdiocese, giving them a sense of the promising future that awaits them.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson shared the story during his homily at the annual Archdiocesan High School Senior Mass on Dec. 1 at St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg.

The story involves a woman who was meeting with a priest to plan her funeral. The woman told the priest about all the details she had made, including the readings and the music she wanted for her funeral Mass. Then she hesitated before she asked the priest about the last detail she wanted.

“She finally said, ‘It’s going to sound odd, but I have one more request,’” the archbishop told the nearly 1,000 seniors from 11 Catholic high schools across central and southern Indiana. “He said, ‘What’s that?’ She said, ‘I want a small fork placed in my coffin.’ He said, ‘May I ask why?’

“She said, ‘When I was a little girl, when we would go to nice restaurants, you would have the salad fork and the regular dinner fork, and there would be the knife and the spoon. Then above the plate, there would be this small fork. I learned over time that when I saw the small fork, there was going to be dessert. Every time I got to a restaurant, I looked for that small fork. I always knew when I saw that small fork, the best was yet to come.’

“She said, ‘I want the small fork in my coffin to represent my belief, my faith that the best is yet to come.’”

After pausing for a moment to let the story sink in, Archbishop Thompson told the seniors, “The best in your lives is yet to come. We as Catholics, as Christians, as people of God, as much as we hope, God is going to provide us with an abundance beyond what we can wholly imagine. The best is yet to come.

“Whether you’re at a high or a low in your life, whatever it is, always remember that the best is yet to come. This Eucharist points to that reality for us. Jesus

giving us his body and his blood so that we might have life everlasting.”

During his homily, Archbishop Thompson also turned the seniors’ focus to the theme of a mountain, as that was the setting for both readings that day—Is 25:6-10a and Mt 15:29-37.

“In Scripture, the mountain is an important symbol. When the Scriptures tell us about mountains, it’s a way of telling us that something very important is going to happen,” the archbishop said. “It’s on the mountain where people bring Jesus the lame, the blind, the mute, the deformed, and he heals them. It’s on the mountain that he feeds this multitude because he’s moved with compassion.

“Mountains are important, and your senior year is a mountain moment. Think back to when you first came to your school as a freshman. You must have been anxious, a little nervous. Now, you’re at the top of the mountain in your high school. Enjoy it. In a few months, you’ll come back down. And there will be other mountains.”

The archbishop encouraged the seniors to keep reaching for the mountain experiences throughout their lives. He also encouraged them to take advantage throughout their lives of the mountain experience that Christ has made possible.

“For us as Catholics, the Eucharist is our mountain here on Earth. It’s the peak for us. The Church calls the eucharistic celebration the source and summit of our identity and our mission as Catholics. Every ministry, every service, everything we do and say should draw from and flow back to this mountain, this experience.

“Throughout your lives, the rest of your high school year, whatever you do, never stop climbing the mountain. Never stop bringing your needs, your hopes, your fears, your anxieties, your joys to the mountain of the Eucharist. To be nourished, to be fed, to keep climbing to the next mountain, remembering all that Jesus promises, that the best is yet to come.”

During Communion, receiving the Eucharist was embraced by many of the seniors from the 11 high schools: Bishop Chatard, Brebeuf Jesuit, Cardinal Ritter, Cathedral, Father Michael Shawe Memorial, Father



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson greets a student after the annual Archdiocesan High School Senior Mass on Dec. 1, 2021, at St. Malachy Church in Brownsburg. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Thomas Scecina, Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Providence, Providence Cristo Rey, Roncalli and Seton Catholic.

After the Mass, several students shared that the archbishop’s homily touched them.

“I really liked the story about the woman and the fork,” said Tyler Wuestefeld, a senior at Oldenburg Academy in Oldenburg and a member of St. Michael Parish in Brookville. “It really spoke to me that the best is really to come.”

“I really liked the way he talked about the mountaintop,” said Mercedes Benjamin, a senior at Our Lady of Providence and a member of St. Anthony of Padua Parish, both in Clarksville. “Senior year is one of our mountains, but there are better things to come in life and through God. Our goal in life is to reach heaven, and we should always keep that in mind.”

“I really liked that while it may seem we are at the top now, we have other things waiting for us,” said Alyssa Wanstrath, a senior at Oldenburg Academy and a member of St. Louis Parish in Batesville. “There’s nothing here on Earth that will be our high point more than eternal life.” †

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 St. John Paul II Catholic School, Sellersburg
 St. Mary of the Knobs Catholic School, Floyds Knobs

Celebrating Catholic Schools Week

Catholic schools help students discover God's call to pursue vocations to the priesthood and religious life

By Sean Gallagher

Catholic elementary and high schools aren't seminaries or houses of religious orders. But they are communities where seeds of vocations are planted and nurtured.

Catholic schools across central and southern Indiana have done just that for decades.

In the Indianapolis South Deanery, three young men had their faith deepened in parish grade schools and at Roncalli High School and are now being formed for service in the Church—two as archdiocesan seminarians, one in the Congregation of Holy Cross.

Their stories show how Catholic schools can play a crucial role in helping young people hear God's call for service to the faithful both across central and southern Indiana and around the world.

'The archdiocese is my home'

Seminarian Khaing Thu grew up in a Catholic family in Myanmar in southern Asia. When he was 11, he and his family were resettled in Indianapolis as refugees fleeing religious persecution in their native country.

They were given a warm welcome by the members of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish on Indianapolis' south side.

"When we arrived, we didn't have anything," Thu said. "It was my parish community that offered my family help by taking us to a food pantry, bringing us furniture and clothing."

Thu and his two older siblings felt this support, especially at St. Mark the Evangelist School and at nearby Roncalli High School.

"My teachers helped me," he said. "My classmates helped me with classwork. They explained to me what the words meant. My parents wanted me to get a



Seminarians Samuel Hansen, left, and Khaing Thu pose on Jan. 15 outside Roncalli High School in Indianapolis. Both graduates of Roncalli, the pair are now seniors at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

good experience in a Catholic school where I could learn about the faith."

Starting at St. Mark as a sixth grader, Thu became a leader among his peers just two years later, serving as a sacristan at school Masses.

"I took that as a big role," Thu recalled. "Being able to go to Mass with the whole school and learning about the faith inspired me."

In such a supportive environment, Thu and his two older siblings thrived. His older brother has served as a member of the U.S. Marines and his older sister is a medical student.

For his part, Thu discerned through his years at Roncalli that God might be calling him to be a priest—and an archdiocesan priest in particular.

"The archdiocese is my home," he said. "St. Mark was where I grew up. It's where my community is. If I became a priest, God willing, it would be an opportunity for me to give back. It's the reason I decided to become a seminarian for the archdiocese."

Planting the seeds of a vocation

A year after Thu and his family arrived from Myanmar in Indianapolis as refugees, Jimmy Henke graduated from Roncalli, having grown up in nearby Greenwood.

As a student at the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana, Henke met members of the Congregation of Holy Cross that minister there and discerned that God might be calling him to be a member of that religious community.

After living as a postulant and novice, Brother Jimmy professed first vows on July 28, 2018, and continued in formation at Notre Dame, earning a master's of divinity degree in May 2021.

Now he is ministering with his order in parishes in eastern Bangladesh, near the Myanmar border.

The foundation stones of his vocation and ministry that have taken Brother Jimmy around the world were laid in part at Our Lady of the Greenwood School in Greenwood and at Roncalli.

In an e-mail sent from Bangladesh to *The Criterion*, Brother Jimmy said that these school communities laid "the groundwork for a relationship with God."

"I needed to learn to have that relationship before I could discern in a real way God's particular call for my life," he said. "I am grateful for the seeds and all the hard labor of nurturing those seeds that all of my teachers and administrators provided for me."

Serving in Bangladesh has deepened Brother Jimmy's appreciation for the Catholic education he received in the archdiocese.

"Many of the families I have gotten to know while in Bangladesh cannot afford to send their students to a Catholic school, or the ones they can afford have very limited space," he said. "We [in the U.S.] need to continue to be attentive to those who otherwise could not receive such an education. ... I pray that we will all share the responsibility of helping families who desire to educate their children through our schools."

Lighting the way to a vocation

Catholic education has been a family affair for most of seminarian Sam Hansen's life.

The year before he started as a student at St. Roch School in Indianapolis, his father, Joseph Hansen, became its principal.

Being open to serving God and others was simply part of the air the younger Hansen breathed as he progressed through St. Roch.

"I heard my dad tell all of St. Roch School to 'use your gifts and talents for God and others' over morning announcements every day," he recalled.

And he saw this message put into action by his father, who now serves as principal of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis.

"You have to work above your pay grade [in Catholic schools]," said Sam. "My dad is very busy, but he's also very willing. He knows that what he does bit by bit changes other people's lives for the better."

But it's not just his father that set an example of service for Sam in his Catholic education. His longtime pastor at St. Roch Parish, now retired Father James Wilmoth, made an impression on him in his frequent presence in the parish's school.

"He was my first inspiration," Sam said. "I remember when I was young seeing this happy guy that everyone loved and admired. We can't just have one Father Wilmoth. We need Father Wilmoths everywhere. We need people like that all the time."

Sam has also been inspired by his fourth-grade teacher and parish youth group leader Dick Gallamore. He taught



Holy Cross Brother Jimmy Henke, center, poses on Dec. 25, 2021, after a Christmas Mass in Srimangal, Bangladesh, with Holy Cross Father Kevin Kubi, left, and a family whose baby was baptized during the liturgy. Brother Jimmy is a graduate of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

Sam about the sacrament of penance in the classroom and then helped him put its principle of mercy into action as a teenager in projects to help people in need.

"You can become that sign of mercy that you were taught about when you were young," Sam said. "You see it manifested as you grow up and participate in the ministry of the Church that was anticipated from the start."

As a student at Roncalli, Sam spent two weeks at Notre Dame in a summer seminary immersion program that he learned about from Gallamore as he was beginning to discern God's call in his life.

Gallamore, lovingly known by Sam and so many of his other students as "Mr. G," made a surprise visit to Notre Dame to encourage Sam during his time there.

"When you are openly interested in this calling [to the priesthood], most people don't know how to react," Sam said, "but Mr. G is someone who has dedicated his life to the Church as much as many priests have and really lit the way for me."

While Gallamore acknowledges the influence that Catholic educators can have on young people and their discernment of God's calling, he sees in Sam, now a senior in college, the same love for the faith that he saw in him as a fourth grader.

"A few weeks ago, I had to go over to the church to pick something up," Gallamore said. "When I walked in, there was Sam, praying all alone in the darkness, except for the flickering lights of the votive candles. I thought to myself, 'Some things never change.'"

(For more information on a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit HearGodsCall.com.) †

Catholic educators reflect on how schools can encourage students to discern vocations to serve the Church

By Sean Gallagher

Joseph Hansen serves as principal of Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis. His son Sam is an archdiocesan seminarian. But he knew the importance of promoting vocations in Catholic schools long before his son entered into priestly formation.

"We always need to encourage our students to be prayerful and understand that God has a vocational plan for all of us whether it is the single life, married life, or religious life or the priesthood," said Hansen. "Vocational examples, actually hearing from people that are living their vocation joyfully and are serving God, is a great way to impact our young people as they explore their path."

In that vein, Hansen noted that his own ministry in Catholic education has been influenced by his son's discernment of a priestly vocation.

"I am blessed to have a front-row account of a young man's journey to priesthood," Hansen said. "I can now

share with young people Sam's beautiful vocational story and how content he is as a seminarian."

Hansen and other Catholic educators see Catholic schools as real seedbeds of vocations and the teachers and administrators in them as having a great mission in nurturing the seeds of service in the Church.

In the 37 years that he has served at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis in various capacities, Chuck Weisenbach has seen many of his students go on to embrace vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

"I have frequently commented that Roncalli High School has much to be proud of," said Weisenbach, now Roncalli's president, "but nothing compares to how proud we are to have been a part of the nurturing of so many vocations to the priesthood and religious life. It is clearly our most significant accomplishment."

Weisenbach said that this normalization of priestly and religious vocations at Roncalli has grown enough that students there now see that it is "cool" if a fellow student is discerning such a call.

"The secularistic nature found in most parts of society does not give young people that message," he said. "It is more of a message of 'Why would you do that?'"

At the same time, Weisenbach knows Roncalli and other Catholic schools can do better by helping students know that vocations encompass a person's whole identity and are not just a career choice.

"I think once they understand with clarity and depth that God is calling each of us to a specific vocation in his Church," he said, "we stand a much better chance of our young people discerning what God is truly calling them to." †





Food program helps feed students in need—and nourishes volunteers who make it happen

By John Shaughnessy

coordinates the program that helps feed 225 grade-school children who might not otherwise have enough food to eat during the weekends.

Her first focus is naturally on the students who benefit from the Weekend Meals program, students in five Indianapolis Catholic schools who can't always count on having a meal—let alone a nutritious one—waiting for them at home.



Kathy Laudick

Laudick also thinks of the children's parents. "The parents are working hard and making choices to help their children succeed by sending them to a Catholic school, and I like that," says Laudick, a mother of three grown children and a member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis. "We were fortunate to make a Catholic education possible for our children, and I like helping to do that for other families, too."

There's also another reason Laudick leads the program.

"I was not raised Catholic," she says, sharing how she entered into the full communion of the Catholic Church after she and her husband Jim had their first child. "I felt I needed to be a full participant in our faith. The Church provides us with a grounding and a centering and a reason for life. I express my faith through my actions, helping others and supporting others."

That same approach to faith guided four other volunteers on a recent Friday morning, the time when the group meets every week at Holy Angels School in Indianapolis. On this day, the group filled 225 sacks that included apples, baby carrots, yogurt, oatmeal, muffins and macaroni-and-cheese dinners among other items.

After filling the sacks, the volunteers then delivered them to four other schools besides Holy Angels: Central

Catholic, Holy Cross, St. Anthony and St. Philip Neri.

The 225 students who benefit from the Weekend Meals program have been identified by social workers at their schools as being most severely challenged by food insecurity at home.

These 225 are among all the students at Central Catholic, Holy Angels, Holy Cross and St. Philip Neri who receive free breakfast, lunch and dinner five days a week at school. All the students at St. Anthony receive a free breakfast and lunch five days a week.

While those meals are federally funded, the Weekend Meals program is made available through the generosity of an anonymous donor who has committed to the program through all of 2022.

"It's fabulous," says Elizabeth Ewing, the school nutrition program manager for the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies in the archdiocese. "Kathy has rounded up wonderful people to help. These are people who are giving of their time and talent."

One of the four volunteers on this day, Patty Schipp sees the positive impact the program has on the children.

"It's not just their physical well-being, it also helps their emotional and social well-being," says Schipp, a member of St. Pius X Parish. "If they're not focused on their food, they can have a better focus on their schoolwork and their friends."

"This is a God thing for me. I really enjoy working with children. I was a teacher for 30 years. I need to do this and want to do this. Plus, it really gives you an opportunity to meet other people in our faith community who I wouldn't otherwise get to know."



JoAn Reed, left, Theresa Desautels, Terry Buckman and Patty Schipp work together as part of the Weekend Meals program that provides bags of take-home food for children at five Catholic schools in Indianapolis. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Schipp made that connection with Terry Buckman as they worked together filling the sacks. Buckman dedicated her working life to Catholic schools in the archdiocese,

including 15 years as the head of student support at St. Matthew the Apostle School in Indianapolis.

"When I was at St. Matthew, I had students I'd tutor after school for free," Buckman says. "I made a bond with a young boy from Mexico. His mom was a single mom. At Christmas, I'd buy a turkey or a gift card for them. I felt that was my calling, and I wanted to continue to do that."

"My heart goes out to kids who just aren't fortunate, not because of anything they've done but because of circumstances in life. I'm blessed to have the time and resources to help people."

That's also the approach of JoAn Reed and Theresa Desautels, two St. Pius X members who are regular volunteers.

"I try to do this a couple times a month," Desautels says. "I know the kids need it, and the food is healthy."

Reed adds, "It's hard to imagine children not having enough to eat. This has to be just a relief to their parents, that it takes the stress off them, that they're children aren't hungry over the weekends."

Laudick views the Weekend Meals program as another example of the difference that these Catholic schools are making in the lives of their students.

"I believe education is so important and so key to providing an opportunity for success in life," she says. "These schools are trying to meet the whole needs of the child—academically, nutritionally and providing a faith education. This is our faith in action." †



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You Can Go Anywhere From Here.



Senior appreciates the role models she has known, the roots she has been given

By John Shaughnessy

Seniors in high school are always considered as the role models for other students. It's a responsibility that Cierra Berry takes seriously because of the role models who have influenced her at Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School in Indianapolis—her teachers.



Cierra Berry

"Scecina teachers not only care about their students' education, they also care about each of their students as their own," Cierra says. "The teachers are doing their part by serving as Christians. Coming to school every day and seeing the teachers do their service expresses how important service is in the Catholic faith."

"I couldn't ask for a better education than the one that Scecina Memorial and Our Lady of Lourdes School have provided for me."

She especially appreciates how her

Catholic education has shaped her life and her faith.

"I will forever consider myself a child of God and express my faith in my everyday life, because that is what Father Thomas Scecina did. 'Giving that little extra' is his motto that we live by at Scecina."

"Learning from a young age to love myself because God loves me has helped me through many rough times and has made me recognize the true definition of love. I appreciate how important it is to express that to others every day."

Cierra embraces her future beyond Scecina because she knows she can count on the foundation of her four years there.

"Knowing that I will always have a large, loving community of people behind me in good times and bad times is reassuring. One example this year especially was having the stands full to cheer on our football team in Semi-State. The fact that so many people were willing to come out, in the freezing cold, to cheer on their school showed the Catholic unity that Scecina embodies."

"Scecina is my family and will forever be my root." †

Layden Adair '22

St. Joan of Arc graduate

- Activities and sports: Basketball, Track and Field, and Student Ambassadors
- College and career: Plans to study pre-law. Accepted at Hanover College and Cedarville University

Heather Willis '22

Our Lady of Lourdes graduate

- Activities and sports: Soccer, Tennis, Student Ambassadors, and Key Club
- College and career: Plans to attend Ball State University or the University of Indianapolis to study business

Principals learn how to strengthen the unique mission and faith-filled essence of Catholic schools in the archdiocese

By Sean Gallagher

RUSHVILLE—A school is just a school, whether it's public or religious. They all have the basic same goal in educating children. They all use the same basic means to achieve this purpose.

Father Ronald Nuzzi, a priest of the Diocese of Youngtown, Ohio, has heard this message again and again from people involved in education during his decades of ministry forming leaders of Catholic schools across the country.

But he's convinced it's not true, that there is a "distinctiveness in the Catholic educational tradition."

"The Catholic school is not just a school with Catholic seasoning sprinkled over the top, or is the frosting on the cake," Father Nuzzi said in a recent interview with *The Criterion*.

Instead, he proposed, a Catholic school "is first and foremost a faith community. It's a place where the faith is lived, practiced and experienced. And the educational processes are the ways that it's done. It's primarily a place to come to learn and grow in the faith. All the other subjects are sort of at the disposal of that. It's a distinctive thing."

This alternative to the message commonly believed in education circles in the U.S. is what Father Nuzzi is sharing with principals of Catholic schools across central and southern Indiana in a series of four workshops sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools during the 2021-22 academic year titled "On the Road to Irresistibility: Selected Documents on Catholic Education."

Father Nuzzi is a professor emeritus of the Institute for Educational Initiatives at the University of Notre Dame in northern Indiana. He has developed graduate programs at three Catholic universities that train educators to be principals in Catholic schools.

Father Nuzzi hopes the four workshops he'll lead, plus online discussion groups among parish school principals in the archdiocese that meet between the workshops, will strengthen the Catholic identity of those schools.

"I really hope that our time together will give [principals] both the language and the tools to be able

to contribute to the growth of a Catholic culture and a Catholic ethos in their home parishes and schools in an ongoing way," said Father Nuzzi. "It's not just a project for this year."

Pam Wells is in her first year as principal of St. Mary School in Rushville after serving for 26 years as a teacher at St. Lawrence School in Indianapolis and later at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School in Greenwood.

She has appreciated Father Nuzzi's encouragement in the workshops she has attended so far.

"He's very empowering and motivational," Wells said. "Especially in these times that are so difficult, it gives principals a lift."

She, in turn, knows that what she receives in the sessions with Father Nuzzi must be passed on to the staff of her school.

"If it just stops with me, it's not going very far," Wells said.

In his workshops, Father Nuzzi hopes to help principals understand how a Catholic school is an integral part of a parish's mission and ministry, not just something that a faith community pays for.

"The Church doesn't subsidize Catholic schools," he said. "Schools are part and parcel of what the Church is. It's beyond inaccurate. It suggests a relationship that it's not helpful, that the Church has to subsidize schools as if they're some kind of burden."

Wells sees how St. Mary School is a key part of the Church in Rushville carrying out its mission of evangelization. Less than 50% of its students are Catholic. This reflects the population of Rushville, in which, historically, Catholics have been in the minority.

"You have a lot of non-Catholic children that attend Catholic schools these days," she said. "If you can get the children to really identify with the mission of the Church that we are furthering, you're bringing more people into the Church. That's part of our mission."

At the same time, she also knows that her school plays an important role in helping its Catholic students be more anchored in their faith.

"I want them to be able to leave here and continue practicing their faith and passing it on, because they don't



Pam Wells, principal of St. Mary School in Rushville, assists second grader Corbin Snow, center, on Jan. 7 at the Connersville Deanery school. Second grader Chloe Ni works on a computer at right. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)

go to Catholic schools after here," Wells said. "They go to public schools. So, it has to make a huge impact while they're here."

Part of strengthening the faith of today's Catholic students at St. Mary is honoring the school's traditions, which date back more than 150 years.

"It's really important for us to go back a little bit and learn about [our history] so that we can keep it going—whether it's the traditions or teachings," Wells said. "It's important for us to learn how they are incorporated into a Catholic school." †



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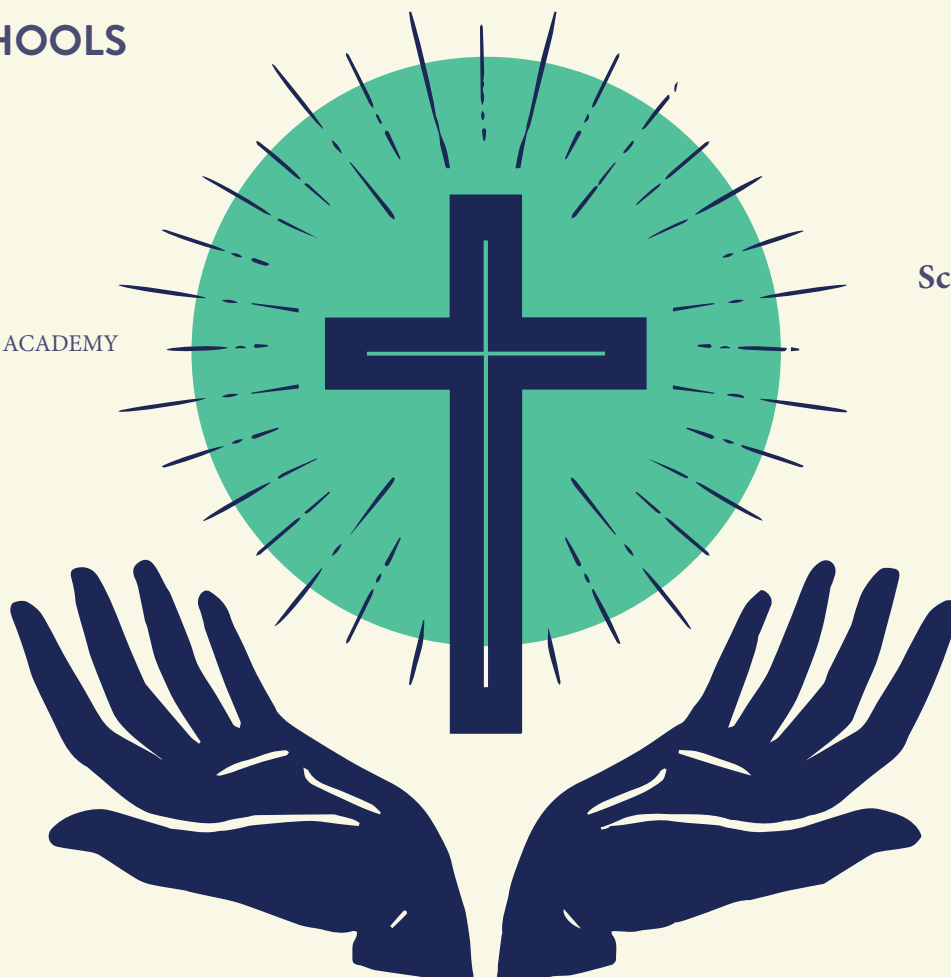
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ollindy.org

Seccina Memorial High School

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seccina.org

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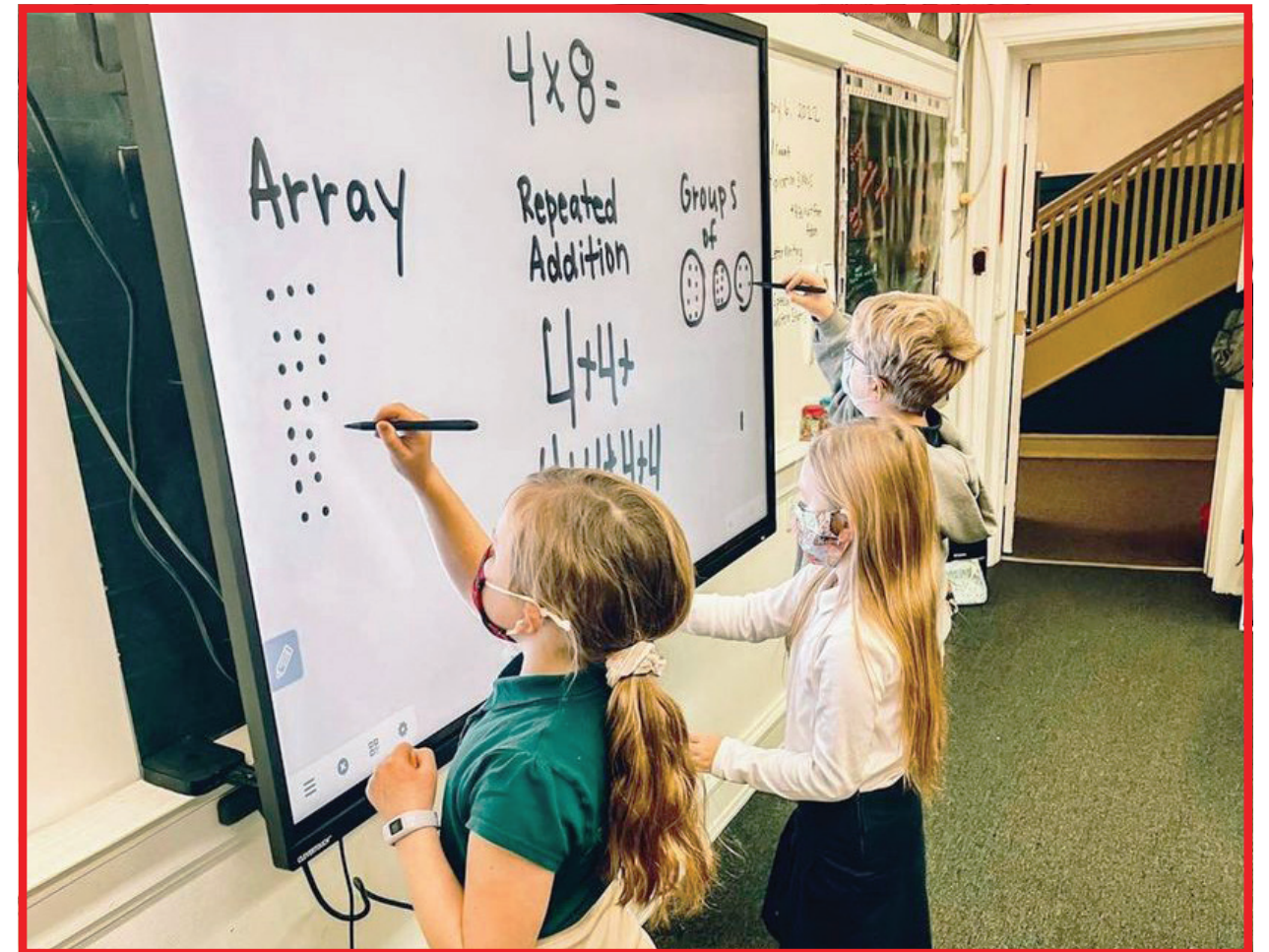
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Celebrating the Joy, Faith and Hope of a Catholic Education



Vertical text on the right edge of the page listing various Catholic schools and their locations, including Bishop Chatard High School, Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School, Cardinal Ritter High School, Cathedral High School, Central Catholic School, Christ the King School, Christ the King School, Fr. Michael Shaw Memorial High School, Fr. Thomas Secora Memorial High School, Holy Angels School, Holy Cross Central School, Holy Family School, Holy Name School, Holy Spirit School, Immaculate Heart of Mary School, and many others.



Voucher program benefits 'the whole family'

By Natalie Hoefler

For Rick and Ellen Taylor, sending their six children to Holy Name of Jesus School in Beech Grove wasn't a financial burden.

They received a discount since Ellen was—and still is—a teacher there.

When it was time for their oldest son to go to high school, however, Rick was not sold on sending him to a Catholic high school. As a non-Catholic, he doubted a faith-based education was better than a public school one.

But when the Taylors went to the open house at Roncalli High School on the south side of Indianapolis, "They knocked my socks off," he said. "I left saying, 'Yeah, he's going to Roncalli.'"

With the help of Indiana's school choice voucher system, the Taylors were also able to send their next oldest son there.

But when it came to their remaining four children, they weren't sure they could afford Roncalli, even with the voucher program. To do so would mean a four-fold financial hit for four consecutive years—the Taylor's four remaining children are quadruplets.

So, when "the quads" graduated from Holy Name, the Taylors decided they would send them to the local public high school.

"They were like fish out of water," says Rick. "It was a whole different world to them. They missed the camaraderie of Catholic school."

And the Taylors knew the four children were missing out on what Rick calls "a superior education" at Roncalli.

After two weeks, Rick recalls, "We called [the school] and said, 'What can you do to help us out?'"

"The person who handles vouchers there was a tremendous help. The paperwork was easy, and we never looked back."

As a pre-kindergarten teacher at Holy Name, Ellen also sees the effects of the state's On My Way Pre-K voucher program.

"The voucher program has increased our enrollment a great deal," says Ellen, who is also a member of the school's parish, Holy Name of Jesus. "I have a full class of 24 pre-K kids, and there's a waiting list to get in."

"And they're not all Catholic. If you can bring in more non-Catholic kids, that gives you more opportunity to share the faith."

As for the quadruplets, they will graduate from Roncalli this spring. As a 1991 graduate of the school, Ellen is proud all six of her children will be alumni.

"There's just a sense of community and family there," she says.

Nick and Jennifer Vermillion feel the same way about Our Lady of the Greenwood School in Greenwood. Thanks to the Indiana school choice voucher program, their three children are able to attend the school.

"It's a whole family atmosphere," Jennifer says about the school. "We love that they bring God into every single day there, and not just in religion class."

Nick, who was welcomed into the full communion

of the Church 16 years ago and worships with his family at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, calls the parochial school's education "top notch."

"As far as academics go, I've always been floored with what [the students are] working on versus my public education when I was a kid," he says. "[Our kids] are doing things some of their friends haven't even touched on in public school."

The Vermillions say sending their three children to a Catholic school wouldn't be possible without the voucher system.

"My husband and I both as adults changed careers," says Jennifer. "I went to nursing school and he went to pharmacy school. The amount of debt from furthering our own education, it was a struggle to be able to pay for their education along with taking care of our financial obligations."

Applying for the vouchers "was really easy, and the school was so helpful," she says. "It didn't take me longer than 20 to 30 minutes to get everything put together and sent off."

"I am ecstatic that it's there," Nick says of the voucher program. "I'm also very thankful that they don't just look at your income. On paper for us that looks really great, but when you factor out all the expenses for student loan payments and mortgage payments—after we paid for Catholic education before [using the voucher system], we barely had two pennies to rub together. This really takes a lot of stress off of us financially."

Jennifer adds that the voucher system has "benefited the whole family."

Their children are learning "how to see God in everything, and we don't feel like we have to pick up extra shifts just to make ends meet," she says.



Nick and Jennifer Vermillion pose with their children Isabelle, Alexis and Evelyn, all three of whom attend Our Lady of the Greenwood School in Greenwood thanks to the Indiana school choice voucher program. (Submitted photo)

"We're able to take the time we need mentally and emotionally to be home and spend time with our family."

(For more information on the Indiana school choice voucher program, see page 13B.) †

School choice expansion is a game-changer for families wanting a Catholic education for their children

By John Shaughnessy

John Elcesser considers the expansion of Indiana's school choice program in 2021 as a game-changer—dramatically



John Elcesser

increasing the number of Hoosier families who will become eligible for vouchers that will help them choose where they want their children to attend school.

Regarding families who view a Catholic school as the best option for their

children, Elcesser says the expansion of the program will help parents who believe they can't afford Catholic education for their children, and it will also benefit parents who struggle and sacrifice to provide a Catholic education for their children.

"We believe there are probably quite

a few families that may have wanted or even dreamed of getting a Catholic school education, but just probably didn't think it was affordable. Now it probably is," says Elcesser, the executive director of the Indiana Non-Public Education Association (INPEA), which represents the state's more than 400 non-public schools, including Indiana's 175 Catholic schools.

"There are also families who are continuing to struggle to make that tuition payment, working multiple jobs. And this is going to help them as well."

As an example, Elcesser notes that under the new state guidelines, "a family of four can make up to \$147,075 and still be eligible" for a voucher. Now, all eligible students will receive a 90% voucher, which represents 90% of the state's tuition support for a child if they attended a local public school.

The important point, Elcesser stresses, is that the expanded program helps families choose where they want their child to be educated.

"The State of Indiana believes, our organization believes, and our schools believe that every family—no matter where their ZIP code is or their financial circumstances—should be able to send their children to the school that's the right fit for them," Elcesser says.

"For us in the Catholic sector, it aligns with our Catholic social teaching. We believe in the preferential option for the poor. We also believe that parents are our children's primary educators. They should be making the decision about what school is the best fit for them, whether that be traditionally public, whether that be charter, whether that be a non-public—faith-based or secular."

The recent expansion of Indiana's school choice program comes 10 years after the program started in the state, which is considered at the forefront of the effort to allow families to choose where they want their children to attend school.

"There are 26 other states and the District of Columbia that have some sort of choice program," Elcesser notes.

In the 10 years of Indiana's program, about 273,000 children have benefitted from it, by getting a Choice Scholarship that can be applied to tuition at the non-public school of their choice, he says. And more than \$1 billion has been awarded to families to make that choice a reality.

"It's hard to believe the number of families whose lives have been significantly impacted by these programs," Elcesser says.

Now, he adds, many more families will have that opportunity, thanks to the expansion of the program.

(To apply for a voucher, contact the participating nonpublic school of your choice. For more information, visit the Institute for Quality Education's website, www.myschooloptions.org.) †

How to afford A CATHOLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION

Understanding Tax Credit Scholarships and Indiana School Vouchers

Tax Credit Scholarship (SGO)

I meet these eligibility requirements:

- Indiana resident
- My family is at least 300% or below the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Guidelines* (see chart).

Choice Scholarship

I meet these eligibility requirements:

- Indiana resident
- Apply before September 1, 2022
- My child attended public school the previous year (two semesters) OR received a Tax Credit Scholarship or Voucher the previous school year

TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIP INCOME ELIGIBILITY

2021-2022 TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIP INCOME GUIDELINES

Household Size	Household Income
1	\$71,484
2	\$96,681
3	\$121,878
4	\$147,075
5	\$172,272
6	\$197,469
7	\$222,666
8	\$247,863
9	\$273,060
10	\$298,257

* Income levels are based on adjusted gross income and are 300% of the cap for Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program guidelines. SGOs may set their income limits lower than 300% if they so choose.

What are Tax Credit Scholarships?

The Indiana Tax Credit Scholarship Program provides scholarship support to families who want to enroll their children in the Catholic school of their choice. Qualifying students in grades K-12 can receive a minimum of a \$500 Tax Credit Scholarship.

Who qualifies for a Tax Credit Scholarship?

- A student whose family meets the income eligibility guidelines for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program (see chart), AND
- A student who is enrolled in an eligible Catholic school.

Why should I apply now?

If your family qualifies for assistance, but you do not apply when your child first enters school, you may lose the opportunity for a Voucher or Tax Credit Scholarship for the next 12-13 years. Current Catholic school students CAN receive a Tax Credit Scholarship, making them eligible for a Voucher the following year.

How do I apply?

1. To see how much tuition assistance you are eligible for, first register at your Catholic school of choice.
2. To apply for funding, visit www.i4qed.org/sgo.

AND the following:

My family is at or below 300% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level (see chart). Note: Tax Credit Scholarship and Choice Scholarship financial eligibility is the same for both programs

K-12 SCHOOL VOUCHERS

What is an Indiana School Voucher?

A Voucher is a state-funded scholarship that helps cover the cost of tuition at a private school. Qualifying students in grades K-12 can receive up to 90% of the local per-student state funding amount.

Who qualifies for a Voucher?

- Student received a Choice Scholarship in a preceding school year, including a school year that does not immediately precede the current school year.
- Student received a Tax Credit Scholarship from an approved SGO during any previous school year.
- Student has a disability that requires special education services, a documented IEP or ISP.
- Student would be required to attend an "F" rated public school based on residence for the coming school year.
- Student was enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 in a public school, including a charter school, in Indiana for prior two semesters.
- Student has a sibling who received a Choice Scholarship or Tax Credit Scholarship at any time in their K-12 education.
- Student received and used an Early Education Grant to attend Pre-K at an eligible Choice School and the child is remaining at that school for Kindergarten.
- Student is in foster care.

Why should I apply now?

If your family qualifies for assistance, but you do not apply when your child first enters school, you may lose the opportunity for a Voucher or Tax Credit Scholarship for the next 12-13 years. Eligible Students enrolled in a Catholic school CAN receive a Tax Credit Scholarship, making them eligible for a Voucher the following year.

How do I apply for an Indiana school Voucher?

1. To see how much tuition assistance you are eligible for, first register at your Catholic school of choice.
2. To apply for funding, visit www.doe.in.gov/choice.

Additional local scholarships
may also be available.
Contact your local Catholic school.

Pre-K vouchers are available in all counties
throughout Indiana. For more information,
log onto www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/4932.htm.



ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS



'Being a part of a child's life is an honor'

By John Shaughnessy

In his 41 years as a Catholic educator, Rob Rash has dealt with questions and challenges from parents, teachers and principals. But the

most challenging question he's ever had to answer came from a small girl in the first grade.

The question came during recess as Rash was having a tough day during the time he was principal at St. Simon the Apostle School in Indianapolis.



Rob Rash

The little girl looked up at him and asked, "Do you like your job?"

"On that particular day, I did not," Rash recalls. "It had been a very demanding day, and she must have sensed my struggle. I replied to her, 'Some days I do, and some days I don't.' That was the first time I articulated the demands of being a school leader. Fortunately, she followed with an additional question."

The little girl asked, "What is it about your job you like?" Rash immediately responded, "You!"

Rash has shared that story often in meetings with new principals since he became an assistant superintendent of Catholic schools in the archdiocese in 2005. For Rash—who is retiring on Feb. 4 at the age of 65—that story captures many of the important qualities that he associates with Catholic education, especially the educators who provide it.

"Teachers and principals love children first and foremost," he says. "Being a part of a child's life is an honor and a privilege."

"I feel very fortunate to be a small part in a child's life. They might not even remember those interactions when they were young. That is not the point. For a brief time in the lives of many, we get to contribute to the growth and development of future adults. Quite a responsibility."

The memories and even some emotions have flowed for Rash as his retirement nears, including the story of the tough conversation that he had with a mother who

wanted to pull her child out of the school where he was the principal.

'Seek to understand'

"Her child was struggling with many issues outside of school," Rash recalls. "She was upset with me and the teacher. During our many discussions, I had to state that I believed that our school was the best thing going on right now for her son, and he should not leave our school."

The mother relented, her son continued through the Catholic grade school, and he graduated with honors from Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School in Indianapolis.

"I was very pleased to hear that he later graduated from college and obtained a master's degree," Rash says. "Years later, his mom would say that her son went on to great things because I would not let him leave our school."

"Believing in what you do and believing in the potential in children is a very powerful thing."

A valuable piece of advice from St. Francis of Assisi has also guided Rash during his 41 years in Catholic education: as a teacher at Our Lady of Lourdes School and Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ School, both in Indianapolis, as a principal at both St. Simon and Our Lady of Lourdes, and as an assistant superintendent.

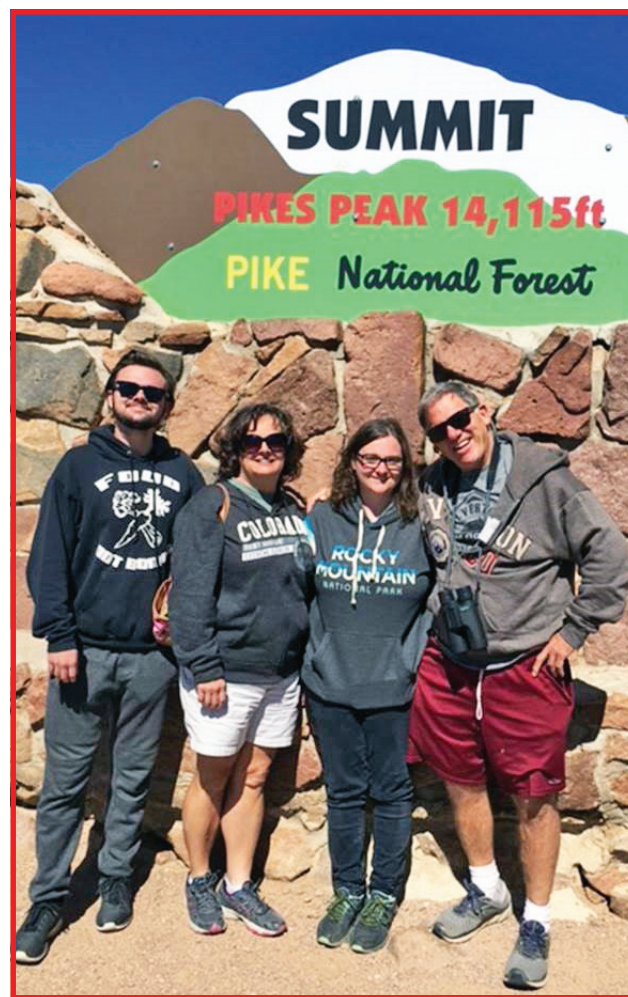
"Whether doing recess duty or resolving conflicts between adults, you have to listen to the truth of each side," he says. "I have always advised principals to 'listen to the truth' behind the conflict. St. Francis had the greatest wisdom here: 'Seek to understand rather than to be understood.'"

As an assistant superintendent, Rash has worked closely with school administrators through the years, helping them navigate through issues that range from comical to challenging. He refers to school principals as "the pillars of Catholic education," citing how they serve "our schools with great dedication."

"It is the most difficult and rewarding job I can think of," he says. "I wish all could see how hard principals work. How much they care about the school community. I often say that no one sees the miracles that occur in our schools each day."

Focusing on what's best for students

Rash is also known for his dedication—and humor—by



During a vacation in Colorado in 2019, the archdiocese's assistant superintendent of Catholic schools, Rob Rash, right, and his wife Patty, second from left, pose for a family picture with their son John and their daughter Katie. (Submitted photo)

his colleagues in the archdiocese's Office of Catholic Schools.

"Rob makes us laugh every day. It is a joy to work with him," says Brian Disney, who is in his first year as the archdiocese's superintendent of Catholic schools.

See RASH, page 16B

ST. MICHAEL-ST. GABRIEL
ARCHANGELS CATHOLIC
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



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The West Deanery Celebrates Catholic Schools Week

The gift of a Catholic education draws three school leaders back home to a faith community that changed their lives

By John Shaughnessy

The friendships that are made in Catholic schools often stay strong later in life. So do people's bonds to the Catholic schools where they made those friends.

Then there is the special connection that binds Father Christopher Craig, Philip Kahn and Curt Gardner.

All three are graduates of Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison. And all three have returned in leadership roles at their alma mater.

Kahn is the president of the school. Gardner is its principal. And Father Craig serves as its chaplain while also being the pastor of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison and Most Sorrowful Mother of God Parish in Vevay.

All three also share the gift of how their Catholic education growing up touched their lives and eventually led them back home.

A perfect fit

The childhood memory has stayed with Philip Kahn, reminding him of the difference a community can make to a person and a family struggling through a devastating time in their lives.

That heartbreaking time for Kahn and his family happened when he was a young child at Pope John XXIII School in Madison.

"My father passed away when I was 8 years old," Kahn recalls. "My three sisters and my mother were in a very difficult situation, but once my mother decided to stay in Madison and keep us in school, it was amazing to get all the support and love from the schools."

"I truly felt like the schools and our community watched over our families and took care of us. I have been eternally grateful and know that it is one of the main reasons I feel as though my Catholic faith is so strong today."

Equally strong is his continuing commitment as an adult to both Pope John XXIII School and nearby Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School—the combined Prince of Peace Catholic Schools that Kahn oversees as their president.

Kahn has served in that role since 2009, a year when he and his wife Tania faced a turning point in their family's life. At the time the president's position became open, Kahn "really enjoyed" living in Indianapolis and his job at Eli Lilly & Co. Still, the opportunity to return to Madison called to him.

"There were many reasons that my family and I chose

to make the change," recalls Kahn, a 1987 graduate of Shawe. "The first was because of the strong feelings I had from my experience as a youth."

"Secondly, we wanted our three boys to grow up in a similar environment so that their Catholic formation would be strong. We have been so fortunate to be a part of these schools. We see our children thriving academically, spiritually and so much more. This has been a perfect fit for us."

Part of that perfect fit for Kahn includes the joy he gets from watching the growth of the students at both schools.

"As the president of the schools, I get to see it from a unique perspective. I don't always see them on a daily basis, but I get to have an impact through many of the activities inside and outside of the classroom. I love seeing them grow and mature over the five, 10, 14 years that they are in the schools. They start out as little kids in preschool or kindergarten most of the time, but grow into such fine young men and women. It makes us all very proud to see the impact we can have."

"Another area that I truly enjoy is working with our alumni. I love to see them come back for a visit or a reunion and hear all the stories that are still being told after so many years. We are truly a small family that gets to follow how our alumni have a great impact all over the world."

The impact of a Catholic education is needed more than ever in today's world, he says.

"So many children are growing up with more challenges. Grandparents are raising more kids, single-parent households, there's the internet and cell phones. Our world can be crazy in so many ways. It's



Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison has been blessed to have three of its graduates return to their alma mater in leadership roles: principal Curt Gardner, left, chaplain Father Christopher Craig and president Philip Kahn. (Photo courtesy of Laura J. Gardner)

important to help students form a strong faith in their early years along with wonderful academics."

He knows the difference that combination made in his own life.

"I truly feel that I am very lucky to be the president of Shawe and Pope John. I am glad to give back to the schools that gave me so much growing up."

A special gift

Father Christopher Craig had just returned from sharing one of the most intimate moments with a family.

Minutes earlier, he had been praying with

See SHAWE, page 16B



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RASH

continued from page 14B

“At the same time, Rob is very dedicated. The first time we were working on an issue, he came in the next morning and shared some wonderful

insights. He started with, ‘I couldn’t sleep so I have been up since three in the morning thinking about this.’

“He has greatly aided my transition. Rob knows every principal, pastor and school. Whenever something comes across my desk, Rob helps me to understand the situation by sharing details about the people involved. He has a tremendous amount of institutional knowledge that will be sorely missed.”

Disney and assistant superintendent Michelle Radomsky both cited one more defining quality about Rash—the way he focuses on what is best for students.

“As an educator, Rob exhibits a genuine love for students,” Radomsky says. “He said he always enjoyed handling student discipline—not something most people like—because he was able to really talk to the child and

try to learn about what motivated the action. That speaks right to what I like most about Rob as a person. He is reflective, caring and he wants what is best for each person he encounters. And when you speak to Rob, he always listens.”

Rash says he learned that approach to students during his first year of teaching in Catholic education—1981—at Our Lady of Lourdes School.

“What stands out was the overall commitment to the students and families by the staff and administration,” he recalls. “When dealing with the students, it was obvious that the faculty and staff cared about the whole child.”

A life-changing introduction, a memorable ride

His time at Lourdes also included another defining influence in his life. His teaching partner introduced him to the woman who is now his wife of 34 years, Patty. The couple has two, now-grown children, Katie and John.

A guitarist who plays in a band, Rash shared his love for music with his children and other students at Seccina during the years he volunteered with its afterschool Rock Band program.

“This program gives some kids an avenue to express themselves,” he says. “Watching kids learn songs, learn their instruments and then perform was a privilege. Seeing the potential and talent in these kids was a

highlight for me. Sometimes we are just along for the ride.”

Rash views his ride as a Catholic educator for 41 years as a good and memorable one. In parting, he shares one piece of advice to his fellow parents.

“My advice to parents is that the partnership between school and home should be built on trust,” he says. “Parents can rest assured that the school administration, teachers and staff are all dedicated to the welfare of their child.”

The welfare of children will continue to be part of Rash’s life in retirement.

He and Patty will increase their volunteer efforts at Miracle Place, a neighborhood ministry on the near-eastside of Indianapolis that provides numerous services for low-income residents, with a special emphasis on children and senior citizens.

He also plans to serve in the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program, a program in which trained volunteers serve as advocates for abused or neglected children as they go through the judicial or child welfare system.

“My hope is to help families in crisis,” he says. “Children need advocates. Being in education for 41 years, I believe that service to others is what we are all called to do.” †

SHAWE

continued from page 15B

the family of a parishioner who had just died, and the sacredness of that sharing still touched him.

“One of the most special gifts of my priesthood is being able to celebrate the great events of life—births and baptisms, graduations and weddings, and to walk with people through the valleys of sadness, suffering and death that we all encounter in life.”

Another special gift for Father Craig is that as pastor of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison he gets to share such moments in the community where he grew up, where he attended school, where his call to the priesthood took shape.

“I grew up just a short walk from what was then St. Michael’s Church and was called on frequently by the priests to serve Mass,” he recalls. “There were many Catholics in our neighborhood, and I thought everybody was Catholic. I remember as a young boy being awed by the liturgy and the beauty of the Church. I dreamed of what it must be like to be a priest, but never thought then I could ever be a priest.”

He praises his parents—Charles and Carol Craig—for the sacrifices they made for him and his brothers to attend Catholic schools. He remembers two teachers who told him through the years that he would make a good priest. He also credits his first-grade teacher for shaping his view of God and one of his homilies.

“As a first-grader, my teacher, Sister Ivo Birch, collected rocks and taught us that God is strong like a rock. To this day, I still credit Sister Ivo in my homily when the Gospel reading about building your house on rock is read at Mass.”

From that solid foundation, he has grown to become the spiritual leader of the parish, including its grade school and its high school—a role he views with humor at times.

“Many of my former teachers are good friends and remain close today,” says the 1983 graduate of Shawe. “It makes me laugh when I think about being my former teachers’ boss. It is more than a privilege.”

Most of all, he rejoices in still being part of a community that has long influenced “Our parish and schools are my family and my home. I know many of our administrators, faculty and staff feel the same way.

“My parents are buried close to their parents in our parish cemetery just a few yards from my favorite door of Shawe High School. It is my favorite door because it is the door that leads to Pope John’s cafeteria for lunch. I will be buried next to my parents one day overlooking the schools. That makes me smile.”

‘We are called to love’

Curt Gardner had reached a point in his life where he felt he wasn’t doing all he could, all he wanted to do. So he turned to God for help.

“My wife and I were struggling for a few years with a sense that we were not doing enough for the communities we were in,” Gardner says about him and his wife Laura.

“So when the opportunity came to both serve a great community and provide a great education and life experience for my own kids, I could not deny that God was answering some prayers.”

As the principal of Shawe Memorial High School, Gardner has tapped into some of the lessons that once shaped his life as a student at Shawe and Pope John XXIII School.

“These schools helped my parents to teach me how to be a leader and gave me opportunities to lead,” says Gardner, a 1998 graduate of Shawe. “They helped me feel, as I went out into the world, that I had a safety net that made it OK for me to take risks and gave me the freedom to fail so that I might one day succeed.

“It never would have worked without the partnership between school and home. When that partnership is in place, then Catholic schools are still doing these things for students today.”

Gardner also embraced Father John Meyer as a role model, remembering the impact the priest had as he served the Madison Catholic community from 1990 to 2011.

“He was in Madison for much of my youth,” Gardner says “So much of what led me to think of service and service to my faith was the influence that he was to me. He was such a great example of Christ’s love. He served our community, our schools and my family with such joy that as I grew to understand our Catholic faith, I always saw it as a thing of great joy.”

Now, he tries to be an example of Christ’s love to students and their families, both in moments of joy and hardship.

“The moments that often stand out are moments of hardship,” he says. “In those moments, communities step up to support each other in ways that show us how to love one another. In my 10 years, I have been able to walk next to a lot of people who were struggling in various ways, and it is those moments that really stand out to me as what it means to be in a Catholic school community.”

It’s all part of the gift and promise of a Catholic education, Gardner says.

“Catholic schools teach our kids to love our Father in heaven and each other. We are called to love. Equally importantly, at our best, we teach kids that love is not just a feeling but actions of service and sacrifice to others.

“It is through these actions that we grow God’s grace in this world. Catholic school students should know how to grow God’s grace when they leave our halls.” †



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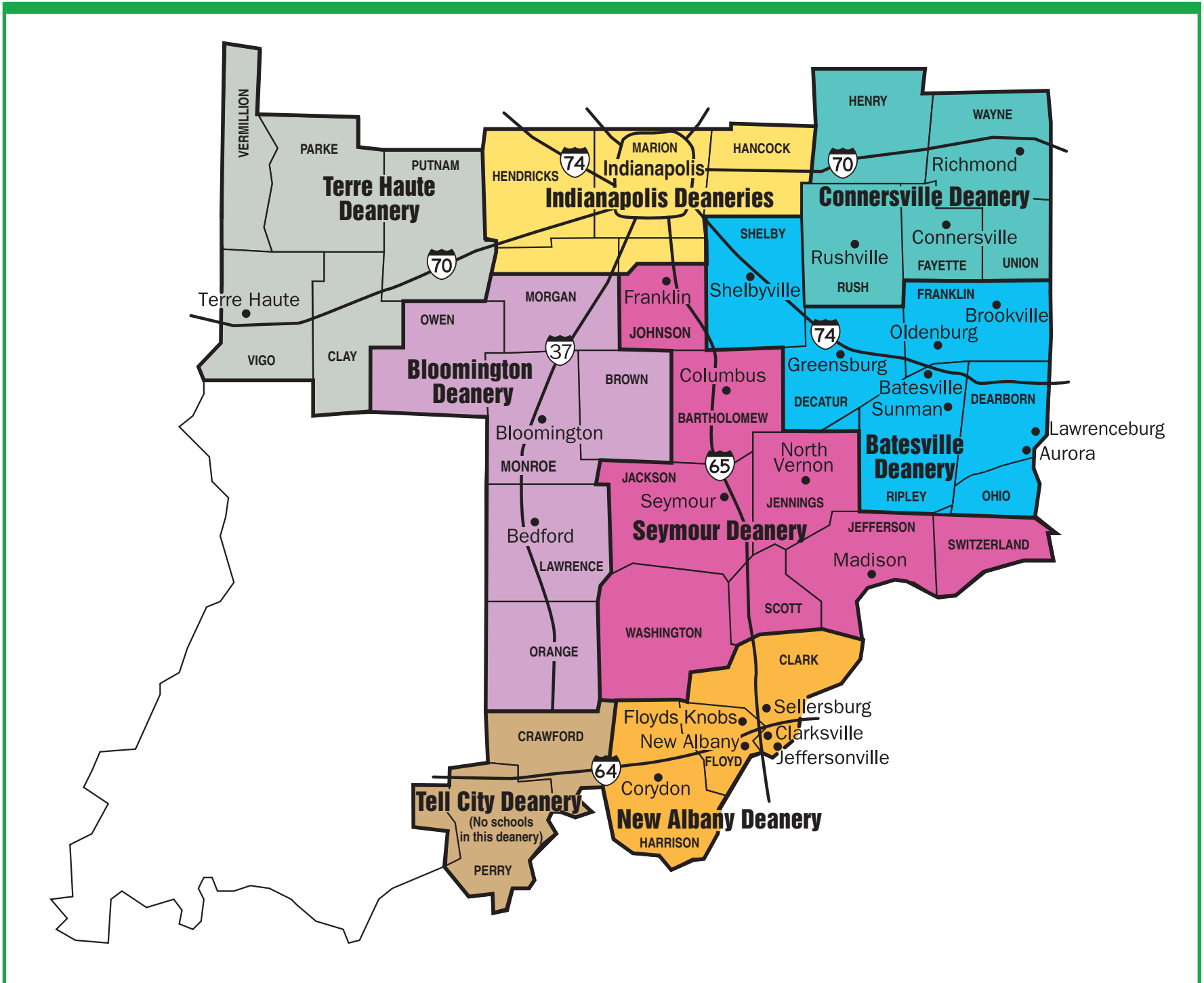
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Batesville
St. Louis School (PK-8)
 17 St. Louis Place
 Batesville, IN 47006
 812-934-3310

Brookville
St. Michael School (PK-8)
 275 High St.
 Brookville, IN 47012
 765-647-4961

Greensburg
St. Mary School (PK-8)
 1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way
 Greensburg, IN 47240
 812-663-2804

Lawrenceburg
St. Lawrence School (K-8)
 524 Walnut St.
 Lawrenceburg, IN 47025
 812-537-3690

Ripley County
St. Nicholas School (K-8)
 6459 E. St. Nicholas Drive
 Sunman, IN 47041
 812-623-2348

Shelbyville
St. Joseph School (PK-5)
 127 E. Broadway
 Shelbyville, IN 46176
 317-398-4202

Bloomington Deanery

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St. Vincent de Paul School (PK-8)
 923 18th St.
 Bedford, IN 47421
 812-279-2540

Bloomington
St. Charles Borromeo School (PK-8)
 2224 E. Third St.
 Bloomington, IN 47401
 812-336-5853

Connersville Deanery
Connersville
St. Gabriel School (PK-6)
 224 W. Ninth St.
 Connersville, IN 47331
 765-825-7951

Richmond
Seton Catholic High School (7-12)
 233 S. 5th St.
 Richmond, IN 47374
 765-965-6956

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School (PK-6)
 801 W. Main St.
 Richmond, IN 47374
 765-962-4877

Rushville
St. Mary School (PK-6)
 226 E. Fifth St.
 Rushville, IN 46173
 765-932-3639

New Albany Deanery

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Our Lady of Providence High School (9-12)
 707 Providence Way
 Clarksville, IN 47129
 812-945-2538

St. Anthony of Padua School (PK-8)
 320 N. Sherwood Ave.
 Clarksville, IN 47129
 812-282-2144

Corydon
St. Joseph School (PK-6)
 512 N. Mulberry St.
 Corydon, IN 47112
 812-738-4549

Floyd County
St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School (PK-8)
 3033 Martin Road
 Floyds Knobs, IN 47119
 812-923-1630

Jeffersonville
Most Sacred Heart of Jesus School (PK-8)
 1842 E. Eighth St.
 Jeffersonville, IN 47130
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New Albany
Holy Family School (PK-8)
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 New Albany, IN 47150
 812-944-6090

Our Lady of Perpetual Help School (PK-8)
 1752 Scheller Lane
 New Albany, IN 47150
 812-944-7676

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St. John Paul II School (PK-8)
 105 St. Paul St.
 Sellersburg, IN 47172
 812-246-3266

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St. Bartholomew School (K-8)
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 Columbus, IN 47201
 812-372-6830

Franklin
St. Rose of Lima School (PK-8)
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 Franklin, IN 46131
 317-738-3451

Madison
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 201 W. State St.
 Madison, IN 47250
 812-273-2150

Pope John XXIII School (PK-6)
 221 W. State St.
 Madison, IN 47250
 812-273-3957

North Vernon
St. Mary School (PK-8)
 209 Washington St.
 North Vernon, IN 47265
 812-346-3445

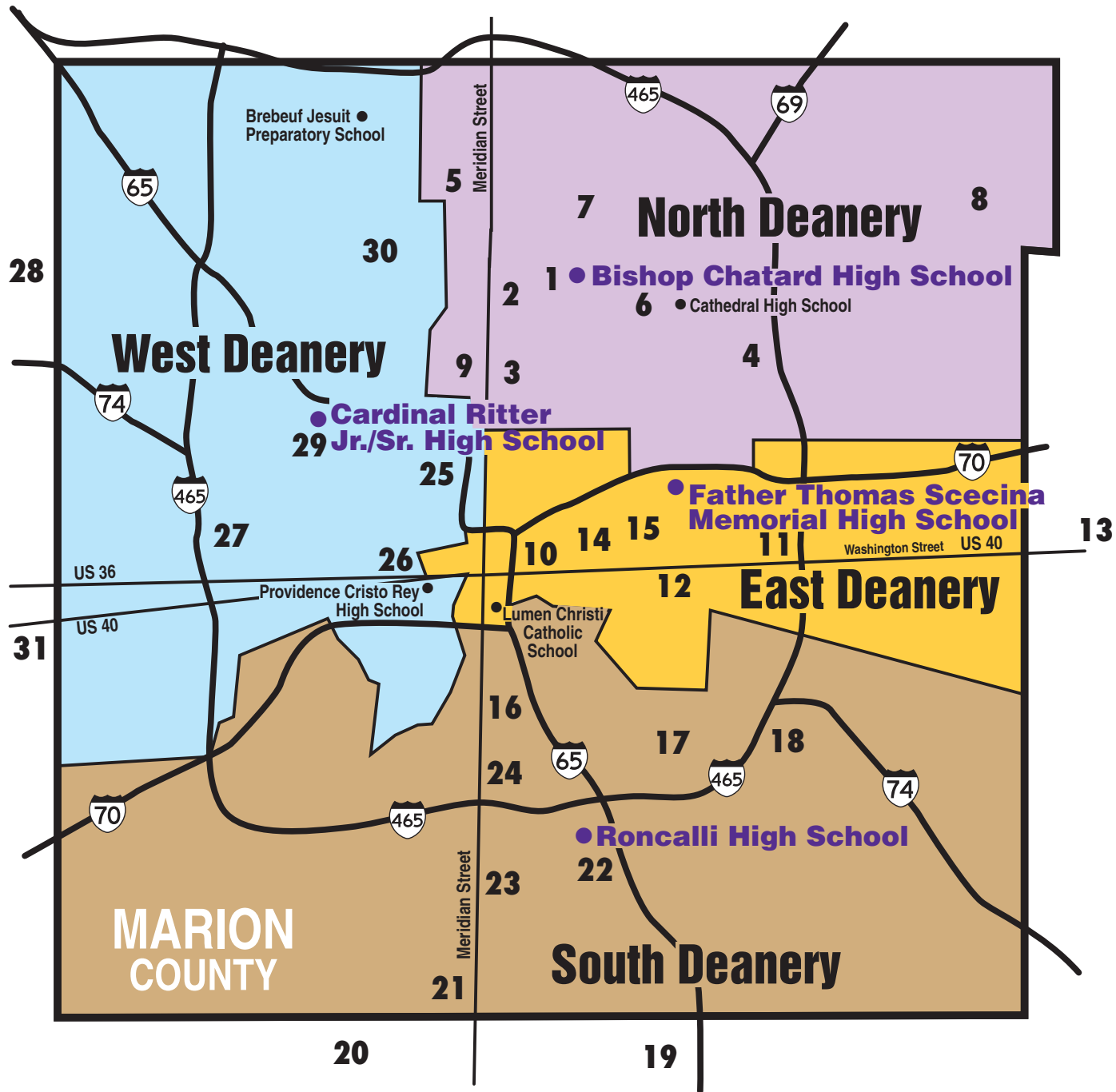
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St. Ambrose School (PK-8)
 301 S. Chestnut St.
 Seymour, IN 47274
 812-522-3522

Terre Haute Deanery

Terre Haute
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- 2. Immaculate Heart of Mary School (K-8)**
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Indianapolis, IN 46220
317-255-5468
- 3. St. Joan of Arc School (PK-8)**
500 E. 42nd St.
Indianapolis, IN 46205
317-283-1518
- 4. St. Lawrence School (PK-8)**
6950 E. 46th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46226
317-543-4923
- 5. St. Luke the Evangelist School (K-8)**
7575 Holliday Dr. East
Indianapolis, IN 46260
317-255-3912
- 6. St. Matthew the Apostle School (PK-8)**
4100 E. 56th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46220
317-251-3997

- 7. St. Pius X School (K-8)**
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Indianapolis, IN 46240
317-466-3361
- 8. St. Simon the Apostle School (PK-8)**
8155 Oaklandon Road
Indianapolis, IN 46236
317-826-6000
- 9. St. Thomas Aquinas School (PK-8)**
4600 N. Illinois St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208
317-255-6244

Indianapolis East Deanery

- **Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School (9-12)**
5000 Nowland Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46201
317-356-6377
- 10. Holy Cross Central School (PK-8)**
125 N. Oriental St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317-638-9068
- 11. Holy Spirit School (PK-8)**
7241 E. 10th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46219
317-352-1243

- 12. Our Lady of Lourdes School (PK-8)**
30 S. Downey St.
Indianapolis, IN 46219
317-636-0136
- 13. St. Michael School (PK-8)**
515 Jefferson Blvd.
Greenfield, IN 46140
317-462-6380
- 14. St. Philip Neri School (PK-8) ***
545 N. Eastern Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46201
317-636-0134
- 15. St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) School (PK-8)**
1401 N. Bosart Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46201
317-353-2282

Indianapolis South Deanery

- **Roncalli High School (9-12)**
3300 Prague Road
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-787-8277
- 16. Central Catholic School (PK-8) ***
1155 E. Cameron St.
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317-783-7759
- 17. Holy Name of Jesus School (PK-8)**
21 N. 17th Ave.
Beech Grove, IN 46107
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317-881-7422
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- 23. St. Mark the Evangelist School (PK-8)**
541 E. Edgewood Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-786-4013
- 24. St. Roch School (PK-8)**
3603 S. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-784-9144

Indianapolis West Deanery

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3360 W. 30th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46222
317-924-4333
- 25. Holy Angels School (PK-6) ***
2822 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208
317-926-5211
- 26. St. Anthony School (PK-8)**
349 N. Warman Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46222
317-636-3739
- 27. St. Christopher School (PK-6)**
5335 W. 16th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46224
317-241-6314
- 28. St. Malachy School (PK-8)**
330 N. Green St.
Brownsburg, IN 46112
317-852-2242
- 29. St. Michael-St. Gabriel Archangels School (PK-8)**
3352 W. 30th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46222
317-926-0516
- 30. St. Monica School (PK-8)**
6131 N. Michigan Road
Indianapolis, IN 46228
317-255-7153

- 31. St. Susanna School (PK-8)**
1212 E. Main St.
Plainfield, IN 46168
317-839-3713

Private Schools

- **Lumen Christi Catholic School (PK-12)**
580 E. Stevens St.
Indianapolis, IN 46203
317-632-3174
- **Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School (9-12)**
2801 W. 86th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46268
317-524-7128
- **Cathedral High School (9-12)**
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‘Blessed are the meek’ may be most misunderstood of beatitudes

By Sr. Mary Lea Hill, F.S.P.

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land” (Mt 5:5).

The beatitudes are perhaps the most beautiful and compelling part of the Gospel. They are poetic and inspiring, and yet also enigmatic and confusing.

Among the virtuous characteristics praised in the beatitudes, the most misunderstood is likely meekness.

For the most part, we get the gist of poverty of spirit, of mourning, of the pursuit of justice, of mercy, of purity of heart, of peacemaking and even, to some extent, being persecuted for doing what is right. Aspiring to meekness, however, isn’t on many bucket lists.

And how vague a reward is it to inherit the land?

The way we think of meekness is often in terms of weakness, a certain mousiness, a fear of assertion, a preference for standing down or staying put. This is not biblical meekness as displayed by Jesus, which is a certain composure, a gentleness of spirit.

To grasp this well, we look more closely at Jesus who put aside the power and privilege of divinity to take on our humanity. He could have simply appeared on the human scene as a triumphant Messiah, but that would have done little for us.

We would have been redeemed, yes, of course, but you and I would have learned nothing about the tragedy of sin and the merciful love of God. We needed to see the story played out in our humanity by a man like us.

God became man—the magnificence of God took on human flesh to dwell among us. He came as a child, lived our ordinary daily life, shared our toil and died our death in a supreme act of meekness.

He who cured the paralytic and raised the dead could certainly have made short work of his enemies, but his was a mission of mercy—another name for true meekness.

Children are often thought of as meek, but true meekness is defined by self-control. It speaks of what we possess.

We like to invent superheroes and assume their persona to experience their superhuman powers—to escape from our own natural weakness.

How unaware it seems we are that Jesus Christ already went there and did that as one of us. Best of all, he enables us to live in his image, to possess his power by our



Keith Thompson of Salem, Ore., is baptized on April 3, 2021, at Queen of Peace Church in Salem. Also pictured is Calli Hardwick-Wood, who also was baptized. Christ enables us to live in his image. It is an image of true meekness that we receive when we are incorporated into him at baptism. (CNS photo/Daniel Black, *Catholic Sentinel*)

incorporation into him at baptism. A part of this Christ-power is meekness.

Bullying at all levels of society can be countered by meekness. Rather than lashing out at irritation or insult, the meek rely on a positive energy that steels the nerves and soothes the spirit.

Meekness is complete engagement, calmness, strength and self-control. The meek appreciate who they themselves are. This means not just mastery over the

strong inclinations, like anger and greed, but also over our weaker inclinations like discontent and dissipation.

As I explain in my book, *Blessed Are the Stressed: Secrets to a Happy Heart from a Crabby Mystic*, meekness is more like the martial art of the soul, the black belt of the spiritual life. When we are meek and humble of heart, as Jesus said of himself (Mt 11:29), we are flexing those unseen muscles of the human spirit.

We are in possession of ourselves.

This brings us to reflect on the second part of this beatitude that assures us that if we are meek, we shall inherit the land. I prefer to speak of inheriting the “Earth” because in Genesis we see God bring forth the first man from the Earth.

Then at the end of life we will be consigned to the Earth. The Ash Wednesday liturgy reminds us, “remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” This realization will keep our heart humble and our spirit meek.

Most of us will

at some time inherit at least a patch of Earth, or a few of the goods of the Earth. We may even receive a monetary inheritance. And we know that an inheritance must be claimed. We need to come forward and say, “Yes, that’s me, and so that’s mine!”

In the Old Testament, to say we will inherit the Earth refers to the promised land. In the New Testament, it is the kingdom of the righteous. The Church fathers claim that our body is that Earth. “We shall inherit our own body”—strange to say since we already possess our body.

But we must admit that we are on a constant quest for self-possession, to discover our identity, who we are and how to be our best self. So, we need to act in integrity, building up our spirit like an athlete who possesses bodily control and coordination.

We inherit the Christlikeness that is meant to be ours by our baptism into Christ. You are our inheritance, O Lord.

And this isn’t a once and forever state of being—the beatitude speaks in ongoing terms—the meek will possess, but like all virtue we have to work at it and keep up the good fight until our Earth becomes the new heavens and the new Earth.

(A member of the Daughters of St. Paul since 1964, Sister Mary Lea Hill has been engaged in various apostolic activities from film production to her current position as author and editor at Pauline Books and Media. She can be found on Twitter and Instagram @crabbymystic.) †



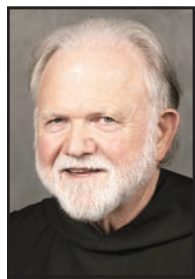
Rosanne Barber prays during Mass on Nov. 21, 2021, at Our Lady of Victory Church in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, N.Y. True meekness is defined by self-control; it speaks of what we possess. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Corrections Corner/Fr. Jeremy King, O.S.B.

Don't look back unless you want to right wrongs

Last February, I wrote a column for this space and began it as follows:

"Well, it is now February of 2021.



January, the first month of the year, has 31 days, and is named after the two-faced Roman god Janus who is always imaged looking both forward and backward. After our experiences of 2020, not many of us wanted to look back, but the events of this

past month have caused mixed emotions of how 2021 was starting off."

When I wrote the column, we had just experienced the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol building in Washington, D.C.

We recently experienced the first anniversary of that event, what many consider an attack on democracy.

On that occasion, President Joe Biden spoke to the nation with great passion and laid out very clearly his stance on what took place a year before. Unfortunately, many are of the opinion that this year is not the beginning of the end but the

first of many commemorations and/or anniversaries of the event; another day like Dec. 7, 1941, Nov. 22, 1963, and Sept. 11, 2001.

As of this past Jan. 6, 725 people have been arrested for storming the U.S. Capitol building, with charges ranging from obstruction of an official to assault. A significant number of rioters are still awaiting sentencing.

So far, the median prison sentence of defendants is 45 days. Others have been sentenced to home detention, fines and community service and probation and there's more to come. Attorney General Merrick Garland has said that the actions taken so far by the Department of Justice will not be the last. The perpetrators will be held accountable. We will have to wait and see.

What does all this mean to those of us who try to minister to less notorious men and women in the federal, state, city and county incarceration facilities within our archdiocese? Looking back is a necessary exercise when we want to evaluate what has happened. And until we understand all the factors that go into an event, we will probably not make much headway looking

ahead in the process of finding solutions.

The circumstances of any crime are most often complicated by what the perpetrator understood to be the realities of the situation. If actions are based on false information, as some say of the Capitol rioters, then who bears the responsibility?

Many of those we minister to in prisons and jails were born into families that were marred by "false information" and "lies." Many of them never had a chance to experience the reality of anything but deception and turmoil.

Some of our past and current leaders are referring to the Jan. 6 protestors as "patriots" who were doing nothing more than trying to "right a wrong."

Is it possible that some of our currently incarcerated sisters and brothers acted out of frustration with the systems that lead them to extreme actions? Let's work together to right the wrongs we can.

(Benedictine Father Jeremy King is a member of the archdiocese's Corrections Advisory Committee, and is a frequent visiting chaplain in the Indiana Department of Correction.) †

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Generations of a family team up to pass on the faith

On a recent Saturday morning, my son Victor squared off in a CYO basketball game against a distant cousin of his,



Andrew Gallagher, a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. Victor plays for a team sponsored by Lumen Christi Catholic High School, also in Indianapolis.

Having my son together on the floor with a member of

his extended family brought my paternal grandfather to my mind, and not just because Victor is named after him.

Grandpa had a love of basketball just like my son. About 100 years ago, Grandpa and four of his brothers made up the "Gallagher Brothers" basketball team that was based in Johnson County.

I was happy recently to receive a photo of them. There they were, all wearing their jerseys with "Gallagher Bros." on them. A newspaper article that went with the photo told of how they had played "an excellent brand of basketball" for a few seasons, had performed well in a tournament at St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville and were the favorites in an upcoming contest to be held in Morristown.

I remember Grandpa telling me a little about his basketball days, including him playing against the legendary John Wooden, the famed college basketball coach who grew up not far from him in Morgan County.

Having been an assistant coach for some years now for teams that my son Victor has played on, I look back on the time I spent with Grandpa and wish I had asked him more about his exploits on the hardwood.

But I do know much more about how important the Catholic faith was to Grandpa. He was a dedicated Massgoer, who also went to confession weekly. Grandpa led me in praying the rosary as a child when that devotion was unfamiliar to me.

I have a great deal of paternal pride in seeing Victor, who bears Grandpa's name, following so well in his great-grandfather's footsteps in living out the Catholic faith.

My Victor was born in 2007, 101 years after Grandpa's birth. Basketball may be part of the thread that connects 1906 to 2007. That's understandable for two men born in the Hoosier State where basketball runs in people's blood.

But the Catholic faith is a much more important and stronger part of that thread binding together four generations.

I've heard it said that although the Church is 2,000 years old, it's always just one generation from ceasing to exist if one generation does not pass it on effectively to the next.

I'm grateful for the great witness of faith that I was given in Grandpa—and my parents after him. If it weren't for them and the grace of God that has flowed through them to me, my own faith, which always needs to be so much stronger than it is, would not exist.

Now I feel privileged—and challenged—to pass on to my five sons the gift I was given by those who went before me.

This is a great mission given to all Catholic parents. If we step back and consider its enormity, we might easily feel unworthy of it. I know I have at times.

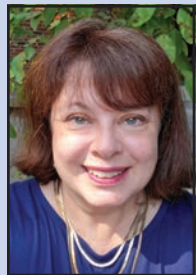
But we Catholic parents can gain confidence in this mission by knowing that we don't do it alone. Our parents, grandparents and ancestors further back are there to help us with their example and prayers.

One player, as great as he or she might be, cannot win a basketball game alone. It's only a team that plays well together that can do that. The faith is passed on successfully in the same way. Evangelization is a team sport. †

Love's Litmus/Natalie Hoefler

Couple's kindness keeps 94-year-old woman going to Mass

At 94, Joan Bey's mind is sharp. And her faith is deep. Through struggles and hardships, her heartfelt response is, "God has been so good to me. He always takes care of me and provides for me."



But her body is showing its age. Several years ago, Bey began to use a walker. A couple at her parish, Christ the King in Indianapolis, took notice.

The woman "started following me to my car after Mass to be sure I was able to get in easily and was safe and didn't fall," says Bey. "Then she called and asked me if she could come see me."

Often her friend brings a glass jar of soup for Bey—"They're so good!" she says of the homemade blends.

One day, she brought Bey a handmade, three-sided, fabric carry-all for her walker—and Bey couldn't have been more delighted.

"It's so handy," she says, joy ringing through her voice. "It's really easy to carry things—Kleenex, a checkbook, pen, sunglasses. That has been very, very helpful."

The day arrived when Bey decided she would no longer drive. "I knew I was a danger to myself and others," she admits.

When she told the couple, they didn't hesitate in their response. "They offered to drive me to Mass," says Bey. "I didn't even ask—they just offered."

Now the couple calls Bey each Saturday to see if she wants to go to the vigil Mass at Christ the King. Unless she isn't feeling well, her answer is always yes.

"I appreciate their kindness," says Bey, emphasizing that the couple makes "an extra effort to pick me up. They live west

of the church, and I live east of it, so they have to drive by the church to come get me, then drive me home and then go past the church again to get home.

"I find that encouraging and helpful and very kind of them."

Bey's gratitude for the couple's efforts goes deeper than their driving out of their way.

"If they hadn't offered to drive," she says, "I wouldn't be able to go to Mass."

In 1 Cor 13:4, St. Paul states that "love is kind." Like love, kindness is not a feeling, but a doing.

And it doesn't have to be much. Little actions that might seem insignificant in our eyes can mean the world to another person.

Maybe it's an occasional visit to a senior or shut-in. Maybe it's a jar of homemade soup. Maybe it's a small but useful gift to make someone's life easier.

Or maybe it's going a bit out of your way to bring someone to the grace-filled, Christ-imbued, weekly sacrifice of the Mass.

"Miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word; always doing the smallest right and doing it all for love," said St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

Even if we don't feel "love" behind our efforts, rest assured that God sees it otherwise. As Christ reveals in Mt 25:40, "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."

(Send your stories of people you know who live out agape as described by St. Paul in 1 Cor 13:4-7 to Natalie Hoefler at nhoefler@archindy.org, or call 317-236-1486 or 800-932-9836, ext. 1486. Include your parish and a daytime phone number where you may be reached.) †

For the Journey/Effie Caldarola

In our brokenness, the Lord walks with us every step of the way

On the morning of Jan. 5, a fire tore through a Philadelphia rowhouse that had been converted into apartments. Twelve people died, including nine children.



Probably most Americans heard the news, then moved on to the next big story.

But then my daughter told me what I'd missed.

"Did you know that the 5-year-old boy

who was playing with a lighter, which started the Christmas tree on fire, made it out of the building alive?"

I felt like someone had punched me. No, I didn't realize a 5-year-old likely caused the Philadelphia fire, survived, and told authorities what had happened. And after investigation, officials believe that the evidence corroborates his story.

My heart broke for that 5-year-old.

He must have known all the victims. Some of them were probably playmates, and worse, perhaps some were his immediate family.

He'll probably live his life in proximity to this community. People may always define him as "the boy who ..."

I confess, my first reaction was to be angry with God. How could God permit such a thing?

Why did God's absence seem so stark in this case? Perhaps because my son was once 5, or maybe because tragedy became so real in the person of one little guy wandering around the house in the early morning whose curiosity would forever change his life.

The world's cruelty suddenly seemed encapsulated in his story. Where were you, God?

I found solace in an excellent column written by Helen Ubiñas in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. She had the exact concerns for the child as I did.

This led her to visit the website, "Accidental Impacts," which provides support to people who deal with a death or injury they have unintentionally caused.

Ubiñas spoke with one of the group's board members, an Episcopal priest named David Peters, who as a teenager accidentally killed a motorcyclist with his car. I was moved to realize how people

respond to tragedy, often because of their own grief, by doing good.

Peters agreed that the child would need tremendous support. And, he mentioned the biblical "cities of refuge."

I visited Exodus 21:13. Mosaic law permitted murderers to be executed, but in the case of accidental death, the perpetrator could find safety from vengeance in one of six specified cities.

Ubiñas suggested that her city, Philadelphia, should be a "city of refuge" for all children.

Life is full of mystery and sometimes faith is challenging. But the God in whom I believe is not a controlling God, but a God who suffers with us and holds our sorrow. Jesus, on a hillside filled with hungry people, told his disciples, "Give them some food yourselves" (Lk 9:13).

We live in a broken world, and the God who mourns with a devastated 5-year-old challenges us to fix things. It's a huge task, one step at a time, but the Lord walks with us.

(Effie Caldarola writes for Catholic News Service.) †

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, January 30, 2022

- Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19
- 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13
- Luke 4:21-30

The Book of Jeremiah provides the first reading for Mass this weekend. This book is regarded as one of the major



Hebrew prophetic works because of its length and the brilliance of its language. Jeremiah was descended from priests. He was from a small village, Anathoth, only a few miles away from Jerusalem.

As occurred with most of the prophets, his prophecies drew sharp rebukes. He even was accused of blasphemy, a crime that had death as its punishment in the Hebrew code of law. (It was this statute that centuries later led some to demand the crucifixion of Jesus.)

Despite the ordeals created by these rebukes and accusations, Jeremiah never relented in proclaiming fidelity to God as a personal and national imperative. He proclaimed that he was on a mission from God in very precise, challenging words.

In this weekend's reading, Jeremiah recalls the day when God called him to the mission of prophesy. He gives the period of time, the reign of King Josiah, who ruled the Kingdom of Judah from 640 to 609 BC. God told Jeremiah to be bold and predicted the controversial response to Jeremiah's prophesying, urging the prophet not to be daunted by unfriendly or angry reactions.

As its second reading for this weekend, the Church offers a passage from St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. It is one of the most compelling and best known sections of the entire corpus of Pauline literature.

Clear and straightforward, it is the beautiful explanation of love. It is one of the best definitions of love, this ability so vital to and treasured by humanity.

Paul then reveals what happens when a person embraces the Gospel. Knowledge increases. Maturity is reached. The insecurities, smallness and shortsightedness of youth are overcome.

St. Luke's Gospel is the source of

the last reading. Jesus, as the story clearly states, came to the synagogue in Nazareth. In earlier verses, not part of this weekend's reading, Jesus stood to read a section of the Book of Isaiah in which Isaiah recalled his own calling to be a prophet. Isaiah gave details as to what this calling meant. It meant that he was God's spokesman, sent by God to bring liberty to the oppressed, hope to the poor, and sight to the blind.

Then, continuing in the passage proclaimed this weekend, Jesus declared that this prophecy has now been fulfilled. In other words, Jesus spoke as the long-awaited spokesman of God.

The audience was outraged, especially when Jesus recalled an incident, mentioned in the Old Testament, in which God showed mercy upon gentiles.

This mention of divine favor for anyone outside the chosen people infuriated the audience in the synagogue so much that they tried to murder Jesus. He, of course, escaped.

Reflection

The Church remembers the great feasts of Christmas, the Epiphany and that of the Baptism of the Lord in early January when it celebrated the mercy of God that came to us in the Lord Jesus.

Now, building upon this idea of God's gift of mercy and the possibility of our eternal life, the Church this weekend presents these readings.

As the Gospel made clear, God's love excludes no one, but all must do their part in receiving divine mercy. We ourselves must love others, with love as pure and unselfish as that described by St. Paul.

Granted, it is more easily said than done. Reactions to Jeremiah and to Jesus remind us that human insights are limited and self-centered. We can be bitter and angry in our selfishness and short-sightedness.

God supplies us with what we cannot find or create on our own, eternal life but also genuine wisdom. Thus, God sent Jeremiah. Thus, God sent Jesus to us. †

Daily Readings

Monday, January 31

St. John Bosco, priest
2 Samuel 15:13-14, 30; 16:5-13
Psalm 3:2-7
Mark 5:1-20

(Response) 1 Chronicles 29:10-11b, 11d-12
Mark 6:7-13

Tuesday, February 1

2 Samuel 18:9-10, 14b, 24-25a, 30-19:3
Psalm 86:1-6
Mark 5:21-43

Friday, February 4

Sirach 47:2-11
Psalm 18:31, 47, 50-51
Mark 6:14-29

Wednesday, February 2

The Presentation of the Lord
Malachi 3:1-4
Psalm 24:7-10
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40
or Luke 2:22-32

Saturday, February 5

St. Agatha, virgin and martyr
1 Kings 3:4-13
Psalm 119:9-14
Mark 6:30-34

Thursday, February 3

St. Blaise, bishop and martyr
St. Ansgar, bishop
1 Kings 2:1-4, 10-12

Sunday, February 6

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 6:1-2a, 3-8
Psalm 138:1-5, 7-8
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
or 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 11
Luke 5:1-11

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Church condemns witchcraft in the various forms it is manifested

Q In a recent homily, our priest brought up various forms of evil that exist in the world. Among them, he mentioned witchcraft.



My father was troubled by this and told the rest of our family after Mass that "real witchcraft," like that practiced by the Wiccans, is not inherently evil since they don't believe in Satan. So, I'm wondering:

What is the true nature of witchcraft, and are Wiccans and similar groups just misunderstood and not harmful? (Virginia)

A Among the definitions of witchcraft offered by Merriam-Webster is the following: "rituals and practices that incorporate belief in magic and that are associated especially with neo-pagan traditions and religions [such as Wicca]."

Commonly, witchcraft involves a pact imploring evil spirits for their assistance. Several passages in the Scriptures warn against such practices. In the Old Testament, the Book of Deuteronomy

says: "Let there not be found among you anyone who ... practices divination, or is a soothsayer ... or who casts spells, consults ghosts and spirits, or seeks oracles from the dead" (Dt 18:10-11).

And in the New Testament, the Book of Revelation warns: "But as for ... sorcerers ... and deceivers of every sort, their lot is in the burning pool of fire and sulfur" (Rev 21:8).

The Church speaks to this in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: "All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to 'unveil' the future. ... All practices of magic or sorcery, by which one attempts to tame occult powers, so as to place them at one's service and have a supernatural power over others ... are gravely contrary to the virtue of religion" (#2116-2117).

It is true, as you say, that Wiccans are continually denying any connection with Satan or devil worship, but it still violates Catholic belief to invoke the aid of various deities and to practice ceremonial magic.

In 2009, while visiting Angola, Pope Benedict XVI spoke critically of the practice of witchcraft. Many Africans, the pope said, "are living in fear of spirits, of malign and threatening powers. In their bewilderment, they end up even condemning street children and the elderly as alleged sorcerers."

Q We Catholics honor many female saints for their outstanding lives of service and virginity. Why do we never mention St. Joseph's virginity or the virginity of some of our wonderful male saints? (Location withheld)

A I think the main reason is that women religious generally refer to their vow of chastity as virginity, while male religious call it celibacy.

An exception does occur in the liturgical prayers marking the Dec. 27 feast of St. John, Apostle and Evangelist. There, the antiphons for the feast refer to John as a "virgin." One of them reads: "To the virgin John, Christ, dying on the cross, entrusted his virgin mother."

I thought it interesting that your question singled out St. Joseph for special mention as a virgin. As I've mentioned in an earlier column, there are some biblical commentators who believe that Joseph may have been a widower who married the Virgin Mary later in life, after already having a family with his first wife.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.) †



Jesus Gets Me

By C.S. Likins

I was an outcast, a cast-off just an afterthought if at all never related always humiliated why why why

I have been lied to and hurt, too scared and made to feel weak hopeless and helpless why why why

I have found that it doesn't matter trying to figure out the reasons people harm and cause pain because the only One who really understands and is always there is all that I need

Jesus gets me
Jesus gets me
Jesus gets me

My Journey to God

(C.S. Likins is a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg.)

Photo: Altar server Megan Pennington holds the processional crucifix before a Mass celebrating the 100th anniversary of St. Anthony Church in Okmulgee, Okla., on July 27, 2008. (CNS photo/Dave Crenshaw, Eastern Oklahoma Catholic)

Ken's 12-Pack/Ken Ogorek

Things most Catholics wish they knew better about their faith

First in a yearlong series

“What does the Church teach about that?” With few exceptions, most adult Catholics don’t feel confident in their knowledge of the Catholic faith.



Critics of catechesis in the 1970s and 1980s use words like “fuzzy” to describe what they perceive as religious education that was light on content. And while it’s important to note that folks involved with faith formation from the late 1960s through the early 1990s weren’t intentionally trying to do catechesis poorly, in hindsight we can identify 10 areas of doctrinal deficiency in the religious upbringing of most people who are parents—and grandparents—today.

The late, great Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein was happy to see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* become available in the mid-1990s. He spearheaded an effort to evaluate religion textbook series in light of this new catechism for the universal Church—the

sure norm for determining doctrinal accuracy and completeness.

Through his involvement with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Archbishop Buechlein helped coordinate an evaluation of several elementary textbook series—resources that hadn’t changed much in their doctrinal content for 20 years or so. While the goal of this evaluation process was mainly future-oriented—wanting to ensure that doctrinal content in catechetical materials met the standard provided by the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*—after a half dozen or so of the most widely used catechetical series were evaluated, a clear pattern of doctrinal deficiencies emerged.

In a landmark report to his brother bishops, Archbishop Buechlein in June of 1997 validated the concerns about fuzziness that had been expressed by proponents of authentic catechetical renewal. His report can be read at cutt.ly/1997report.



For our purposes, Archbishop Buechlein’s report provides not so much deficiencies to be dwelled on, but rather areas of Church teaching to include in this 12-part monthly series of *Criterion* columns. What are some key doctrinal and moral teachings of our holy Catholic Church that might not have been taught so well when adult Catholics of today were children? Why is it important that Catholics of all ages enjoy clarity on these items that God, in his great love for us, has chosen to reveal?

Each month, starting in February, we’ll identify one item from the deficiency list. We’ll share a bit of clear teaching on this area of our Catholic faith—including how the doctrinal or moral teaching relates to our life today.

What are some examples of these Church teachings that many adult Catholics wish they knew better? A prime instance of fuzziness contributing to confusion lays in the Christian view of the human person—or lack thereof.

When we’re unclear on who and what a human person is—and is not—chaos can ensue regarding morality, economics and politics to name a few key aspects of our life together in society.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson considers clarity on the Christian view of the human person so important that his first pastoral letter to the faithful of our archdiocese addressed this very topic. “We are One in Christ: A Pastoral Letter on Fundamentals of Christian Anthropology” can be found at www.archindy.org/pastoral2018. A link to a study guide is available at the top of the page.

So sit back and prepare to have your thirst for knowledge quenched by Ken’s 12-Pack. I look forward to these monthly opportunities to connect with many faithful *Criterion* readers.

(Ken Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis, has lost his six-pack abs. But his 12-part series, whose theme is: *Things Most Catholics Wish They Knew Better*, will run through December. He can be reached at his archdiocesan e-mail address kogorek@archindy.org or by using the contact information at www.kenogorek.com.) †

Donnelly is confirmed as U.S. ambassador to the Vatican

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Catholic lawyer Joe Donnelly of Indiana is the new U.S. ambassador to the Holy See.

The U.S. Senate confirmed Donnelly, a former member of the House of Representatives and the Senate, in a voice vote on Jan. 20.

“Joe is a person of deep Catholic faith and commitment to public service, and I am confident that he will serve in this important new role with vision and integrity,” said Holy Cross Father John Jenkins, president of the University of Notre Dame, Donnelly’s alma mater.

“It comes as no surprise that there was broad bipartisan support for his confirmation as he has proven throughout his career that he is committed to building relationships and working across divisions. Joe has the prayers of his alma mater as well as our commitment to assist him in any way we can,” Father Jenkins said in a statement following the vote.

Donnelly, 66, served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2007 to 2013, representing Indiana’s 2nd Congressional District, and was a U.S. senator from 2013 to 2019. A Democrat, he ran for re-election to the Senate in 2018, but he lost to Republican Mike Braun.

He is currently a partner at Akin Gump, a Washington firm specializing in public law and policy law.

When Donnelly was running for re-election to the Senate, Democrats for Life of America said he “has been a consistent pro-life voice as well as advocate for women and families, co-sponsoring many important pieces of legislation.”

Other pro-life groups, such as the National Right to Life Committee, gave him low marks for his votes on abortion-related issues.

Donnelly has said he is “committed to protecting the sanctity of life,” but

believes exceptions should be made for abortion only in cases of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother.

He said he follows the “seamless garment” approach to pro-life issues, that “all life is critical from conception to natural death.”

“To me, pro-life is actually a broader discussion,” he said.

He was one of seven Democrats who initially opposed the Affordable Care Act in 2010 because the final version did not include a provision to bar coverage of abortion in the federally subsidized private insurance plans the bill would create.

But Donnelly and the others finally agreed to vote for the measure after President Barack Obama said he would sign an executive order clarifying that no taxpayer dollars could be spent on abortions.

Pro-life groups, though, were critical of Obama’s action, saying it would not be effective.

After leaving the Senate, besides working as a lawyer, Donnelly was a professor of the practice of law from 2019 to 2021, teaching courses on American politics, public policy and leadership at the University of Notre Dame’s Keough School of Global Affairs in Washington. †



Joe Donnelly

Marriage ANNOUNCEMENTS

Be a part of our Spring Marriage Edition

February 25 issue of *The Criterion*

Couples who are planning to be married between Feb. 25 and July 8 in a marriage that is recognized as a valid sacramental or valid natural marriage, or couples who were wed between June 30, 2021, and Feb. 11, 2022, in such a recognized marriage and did not have their engagement announcement in *The Criterion* are invited to submit the information for the upcoming Feb. 25 Spring Marriage Edition.

Announcements can be submitted using the form below, or online at www.archindy.org/engagements.

E-mailed photos

Photos should be saved in jpg format and be at least 500 kb. Color photos are preferred. We recommend sending a photo where the couple’s faces are close to each other. Please send the photo as an attachment to the e-mail:

alewis@archindy.org. Subject line: Spring Marriage (Last name). In the e-mail, please include the information in the form located below.

If it is not possible to e-mail a photo, a photo can be mailed with the bottom form. Please no photocopy photos. To have the photo returned, please include a return addressed envelope with a postage stamp on it.

Deadline

All announcements and photos must be received by 10 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 11. (No announcements or photos will be accepted after this date.)

— Use this form to furnish information —

Clip and mail to: BRIDES, *The Criterion*, ATTN: Ann Lewis, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367
Deadline with photos: Friday, Feb. 11 at 10 a.m.

Please print or type:

Name of Bride (first, middle, last)		Daytime Phone	
Mailing Address	City	State	Zip Code
Name of Bride’s Parents (first, last)			
City		State	
Name of Bridegroom (first, middle, last)			
Name of Bridegroom’s Parents (first, last)			
City		State	
Wedding Date	Church	City	State
<input type="checkbox"/> Photo Enclosed	Signature of person furnishing information		Relationship
<input type="checkbox"/> Return photo			Daytime Phone
<input type="checkbox"/> No Picture			

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Retired priest's charitable gift to the Church happened 'by accident'

Father John Geis, a retired priest ordained in 1964, spends most of his time praying and hearing confessions.



At 86, he jokes, "That's about it now."

But that's not exactly true because even though his years of active ministry are behind him, Father John is still actively supporting the mission of the

Church here in central and southern Indiana through a charitable gift annuity he began decades ago.

Ironically, Father John observes, he found out about charitable gift annuities by accident—literally.

When he was a young priest, he injured himself in three separate incidents and suffered two broken arms and a broken leg. "I'm on my last leg," he notes with a chuckle. But the accidents made Father John realize that he needed to save money so that he'd be able to take care of himself.

In those years, priests had to do a lot more on their own and received less financial support from the archdiocese than they do now. To him, Catholic charitable gift annuities offered a way for him to give to the Church out of his surplus, but also receive a benefit when he would need it most.

That's what's unique about a charitable gift annuity: it provides lifetime income that benefits both the donor and the charity. A donor makes a one-time gift of cash, securities or other appreciated assets to a chosen charity and names up to two annuitants (those who will receive the income—typically, the donor and/or a loved one).

In return for the gift, the charity agrees to make fixed payments quarterly, semiannually or annually to the annuitants for life. The amount of the payment is determined by the annuitant's age when the annuity is set up and the amount of the gift. The older the annuitant, the higher the rate. Payments are fixed, but also guaranteed because they are backed by the Catholic Community Foundation's entire assets

and not just the donor's gift. The charity receives the balance of the invested funds upon the annuitant's death.

The joy of both giving and receiving lies at the heart of our Catholic faith. Father John knows that his financial gift is going somewhere it's needed and doing good. "I believe that everything belongs to God. We acquire things to use and to share. We don't live in this world alone," he notes. "That's what's important about giving to others. Everything comes from God and not from us—even the air we breathe. We take of it, and we give back."

Giving isn't just for the rich. In fact, Father John recalls the inspiration he's drawn during 58 years of priestly ministry from the generosity of those who had little. "Some people have some really tough times. I've seen people who are very poor still contribute something. They trusted God to open his life to them in ways that almost embarrassed me. Seeing their sacrifices inspired me. If I'm a priest, I thought, I need to do something for others, too."

For Father John, a charitable gift annuity was an opportunity to

live according to God's will and be considerate of others. "We can't live alone. It's a gift to be open to others. Planned giving is a practical way to be open to the needs of others."

Of course, giving flows from gratitude. As Father John observes, "We cannot outdo God. The generosity of God is in everything that exists. I see this as I get older. Everything is for our good. We have to think of God every day. The first waking moment in the morning, give thanks for life. God has been generous with me, and I want to be as generous as I can."

(Jim Maslar is a Catholic philanthropic advisor for the archdiocese's Catholic Community Foundation [CCF]. Tax or legal information provided herein is not intended as tax or legal advice. Always consult with your legal, tax or financial advisors before implementing any gift plan. To learn more about charitable gift annuities that support the mission of Christ in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, e-mail ccf@archindy.org, or call 317-236-1482.) †

MASS

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Members of the congregation hailed from cities and towns throughout the archdiocese—Aurora, Bloomington, Brownsburg, Indianapolis, Lawrenceburg, Madison, Nashville, Oldenburg, Plainfield, Richmond and more, as well as members from the Lafayette Diocese.

Among the members was a group of students from Father Michael Shawe Memorial High School in Madison. With their trip to the National March for Life in Washington canceled, they made an overnight trip instead to Indianapolis for a prayer vigil on Jan. 23, and the Mass, Indiana March for Life and following rally on Jan. 24.

"Seeing the [Indianapolis and Lafayette] bishops together and all of the priests was a highlight, and seeing all of the people of all ages in attendance at Mass pumped them up!" said Shawe Memorial retreat and pro-life coordinator Chemaighn Drumm, who also teaches theology at the school.

They joined in the eucharistic sacrifice "united in word, sacrament and service," as principal celebrant Archbishop Thompson noted in his homily.

'We cannot be a house divided'

"There has been much written and reported on in the last several months with regard to deaths from COVID, homicide, natural disasters, terrorist attacks and so forth," the archbishop noted. "The numbers are rather staggering.

"Little is reported, however, in relation to other forms of death and attacks against the dignity and sanctity of life. Today, ...

we especially take note of the lives that have been forfeited by the direct killing of the unborn, numbers that don't often get reported as much as other forms of violence."

Archbishop Thompson mentioned the hope that the upcoming *Dobbs v. Jackson* case could potentially overturn the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion.

But he reminded those present that "our focus isn't just on laws. We must be primarily focused on the heart, not merely transforming laws, but transforming hearts and minds."

Those in the pro-life movement should also not be divided, he said.

"Sometimes trying to fight for the same cause, we end up fighting against one another, sometimes losing the focus of the cause," he said. "We cannot be a house divided."

All those who defend life should be "for all the vulnerable of our society, for all in need of our voice: the unborn, the pregnant, the abandoned, the poor, the sick, the disabled, the immigrant, the migrant, the refugee, the prisoner, victims of human trafficking, the elderly and creation itself," Archbishop Thompson said.

"Our voice must be one of faith and reason, speaking out against injustice, prejudice, hatred, gossip, bullying, euthanasia, violence and all forms of abuse. And if you're wondering why I would bring that up when we're here for the unborn, you're missing the point."

He closed by reminding those present, "It is in [Christ], in his name, his mission, that we should march, that we should advocate, that we should keep our focus" in order to be "most effective as missionary disciples."

'Let's go march!'

Before the conclusion of the Mass, which was co-sponsored by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Diocese of Lafayette, Bishop Timothy L. Doherty of Lafayette offered a blessing upon those participating in the march.

"It's a big event," said Evan Lewis, an eighth-grader at St. Lawrence School in Lawrenceburg, who was participating in his first March for Life. "I'm excited!"

Another member of his group, Jacob Flaig, an eighth-grader at St. Mary School in Aurora, was also marching for the first time.

"I thought it would be interesting to come and march," he said. "And I like to support the pro-life cause."

It was the first time, too, for Grace Dauby, a member of St. John the Apostle Parish in

Bloomington, who joined a group of students from St. Agnes Parish in Nashville.

"I really want to make a difference and stand up for those who have no voice," Grace said of her decision to participate. "I'm a little nervous, but really excited. Mass was beautiful. I'm ready—let's go march!"

Among the 15 students from Shawe Memorial was Drumm's daughter, Olivia.

"I'm marching for something I really believe," said the Shawe Memorial senior. "I want to see some changes in the country regarding abortion laws. I want to make sure that happens. ... I want to help push that change."

Her mother smiled at her group's enthusiasm.

"They're so excited to do what they came here to do!" she said. †



Lafayette, Ind., Bishop Timothy L. Doherty, left, Father Jeffrey Moore, parochial administrator of St. Cuthbert of Lindisfarne Catholic Church in Indianapolis, and Jesuit Father Christopher Johnson pray the eucharistic prayer with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson during a Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis prior to the Indiana March for Life on Jan. 24. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

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Employment

Bishop Chatard High School Executive Director of Finance/Controller

Bishop Chatard High School is seeking a finance professional to assume the responsibilities of the Executive Director of Finance/Controller. The ideal candidate would possess an accounting degree (required) as well as be a Certified Public Accountant (preferred). The Executive Director would report to the school President and serve on the school leadership team.

General Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that the financial plan supports the Catholic identity and mission of the school;
- Establishing financial procedures in consultation with the President and school leadership to ensure the achievement of the financial objectives of the school;
- Preparing reports according to generally accepted accounting principles for the administration and Board of Regents.

The job description can be found on the Bishop Chatard website at www.bishopchatard.org/about/employment. Applicants are asked to email a resume and letter of interest to mmalarney@BishopChatard.org by 5 p.m. on February 11, 2022.

RALLY

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‘when’—we as a state will respond,” he told the crowd, His message was echoed by Mary Carmen Zahrajsek, Indiana Regional Coordinator for Students for Life of America. She referred to the possible reversal of *Roe v. Wade* as “not the beginning of the end [of the fight to end abortion], but the end of the beginning.

“And when *Roe v. Wade* is overturned, it’s going to take more energy, more commitment, more passion for life. There will be 50 individual, state-by-state battles across the nation. And we will not stop until abortion is unavailable and unthinkable.”

During his address at the rally, Indiana U.S. Senator Todd Young also referred to the possible overturning of *Roe v. Wade*.

“I believe this will be the last anniversary in which *Roe v. Wade* is the settled law of the land,” he said, the crowd cheering in response.

“This is where the real work starts. ... This is when together we have to change the culture. And we’re not going to change the culture at these events [or] through our elected officials. It’s going to be neighbor to neighbor, church to church, with our fellow Americans. Culture is upstream of politics.”

In addition to supportive cheers, signs are another way that participants in the march and rally express their views.

“My sign says ‘Black Babies Matter,’” said Elianna Watson, a member of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Indianapolis who attends Hamilton Heights High School in Arcadia, Ind.

“During this current time, we hear about BLM [Black Lives Matter] and other groups talking about equal rights for African Americans. But then you realize that the majority of abortion clinics are in minority areas, and the majority [of abortions] are African American children.”

According to www.congress.gov, 30% of all aborted



Mary Carmen Zahrajsek, Indiana Regional Coordinator for Students for Life of America, leads pro-life advocates in a volley of chants during a rally outside the Indiana Statehouse after the Indiana March for Life in Indianapolis on Jan. 24. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

children are Black. “About 13% of America’s population are Blacks,” Elianna continued, a fact verified at www.census.gov. “It would have been way higher than that if so many Black children hadn’t been killed.”

The march and rally were a show in ecumenical solidarity.

“We’ve been coming ever since the first” Indiana March for Life in 2018, said Rev. Adrian Piazza of Christ Lutheran Church in Noblesville, Ind. “Many members of our church, which is part of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, are outspoken against abortion. “It’s cold, but it’s a good day. We’re glad to be here!”

Pastor Micah Beckwith of Life Church in Noblesville welcomed the marchers to the rally, and a stirring call to unity by Reverend Benjamin Thompson of Progressive Life Ministries Assembly of God in Indianapolis drew cheers from the crowd.

After the rally, all were invited to the offices of Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita for cookies and hot coffee—a welcomed offer given the wind chill in the low 20s.

“We wanted to do this in appreciation of all the effort it takes to come out here and to make voices heard on behalf of pro-life,” said Indiana Solicitor General Thomas Fisher. “That’s a very important issue for this office and the state as a whole. We want to meet the people who are also enthusiastic about the position the state takes. It’s a very exciting time to be pro-life.”

The Shawe Memorial students jumped at the chance for a warm drink and snacks.

It was the end of a wonderful experience for them, said Drumm.

“They were excited to see that it truly is a movement that is bigger than them,” she said. “It made it real for them. They were tired but truly happy at the end of the trip.” †



Sisters Ally, left, Abby and Hannah Taylor (partially obscured), all students at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis, take part on Jan. 24 in the Indiana March for Life in downtown Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



A woman and toddler show their support for life during the Indiana March for Life in Indianapolis on Jan. 24. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Behind the woman in the foreground, students and chaperones from Father Michael Shawe Memorial High School in Madison hold hands for the Our Father during a Mass at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis before the Indiana March for Life on Jan. 24. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)



Members of the Little Sisters of the Poor, who minister at the St. Augustine Home for Aged in Indianapolis, take part on Jan. 24 in the Indiana March for Life in downtown Indianapolis. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)